CHAKRAVARTI RAJAGOPALACHARI'S WRITINGS AND SPEECHES: AN ASSESSMENT

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by

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis entitled "Chakravarti Rajagopalachari's Writings and Speeches: An Assessment" is the bonafide record of the original research work carried out by Ms. N. Subbulakshmi under my supervision and that it has not formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma or fellowship.

Place:Gandhigram

Date:19-12-2002

Signature of the Research Supervisor

DECLARATION

I, N. Subbulakshmi, declare that the thesis entitled "Chakravarti Rajagopalachari's Writings and Speeches: An Assessment" is the bonafide record of the original research work carried out by me and that it has not been submitted earlier elsewhere for the award of any degree, diploma or fellowship.

Place: [illegible]   Signature of the Candidate

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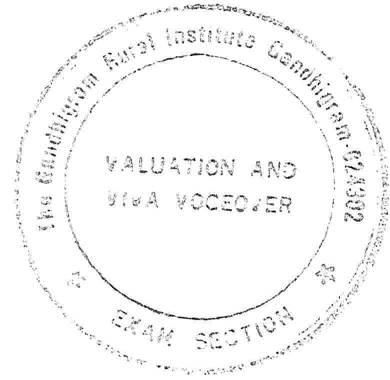
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Contents



Chapter 1

Introduction

Indian prose writing in English has been in practice for almost two centuries. M.K. Naik, in "The Achievement of Indian Prose in English" and *A History of Indian English Literature,* and K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar, in *Indian Writing in English,* trace the history of Indian English prose. Probably the earliest published piece of prose was C.V. Boriah's twenty eight page "Account of the Jains," published in 1809 (Naik, "Achievement" *[222*]) . This form of literature, namely prose, appeared earlier than writing in verse and the number of prose writers was large. They learnt this art due to the infusion of English literature and European thought. Talented Indians used this form for translation, petitioning, journalism, law, oratory, political agitation, social reform propaganda and educational, historical and philosophical studies.

On controversial issues like religious reformation and abolition of the custom of sati, pamphleteering became an effective method to appeal to the intelligentsia (Iyengar, *Indian Writing in English* ([519]-21) . Political prose was inevitably oratorical, since it was in the spoken form rather than the written one (Naik, "Achievement" 226) .

Raja Rammohan Roy made a significant contribution to Indian English prose, concentrating on society, politics and religion (Naik, "Achievement" 224). Among the other pioneers of English prose were Keshub Chunder, Dwaraknath Tagore, Vidyasagar, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, Rajnarain Bose and Naba Gopal Mitra in Bengal and there were also their counterparts in the other regions like Madras, Bombay, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh (Iyengar, *Indian Writing in English* 520). In Bengal Sisir Kumar Ghose founded the *Patrika* and Satis Chandra Mukherjee founded the *Dawn.* In Bombay, Ranade founded the *Indu Prakash,* to which

Sri Aurobindo contributed the series of articles entitled "New Lamps for Old," which proved a political dynamite. In Madras, a leader of the bar, Sankaran Nair, was the inspiring force behind both the 'extremist' paper, the *Hindu,* and the 'moderate' paper, the *Indian Patriot* (Iyengar, *Indian Writing in English* 522-23).

People like Sisir Ghose, Satis Mukherjee, Surendranath Banerjee, Behramji Malabari, Sri Aurobindo, M.G. Ranade, Tilak, N.C. Kelkar, Annie Besant, K. Natarajan, G. Subramania Ayyar, Kasturiranga Ayyangar, T. Prakasam, C.Y. Chintamani, Muhammad Ali, A. Rangaswami Aiyangar, C.R. Das, Lajpat Rai, Gandhiji, M.N. Roy, K.M. Munshi, S.A. Brelvi, and, Subhas Bose were not just 'editors' but leaders, teachers, and prophets rolled in one. Chakravarti Rajagopalachari and Acharya Kripalani also used Indian English prose to preach and educate (Iyengar, *Indian Writing in English* 523).

Rajagopalachari (1878-1972) occupied important positions in public life and was noted for his independence of mind throughout his long and distinguished career. Becoming a stern critic of the Nehru government after Independence, he urged the preservation of individual liberty, the encouragement of free enterprise, the reduction of State control to a desirable minimum and faith in the efficiency of dharma in regulating individual conduct in society. He regarded English as the "gift of goddess Saraswati to India" and wrote "a lucid and firm prose, wiry like the man himself and totally devoid of flabbiness" (Naik, *A History of Indian English Literature* 126).

Rajagopalachari, popularly known as Rajaji, and, among close friends, as C.R., was born on December 10, 1878, as the third and last son of Venkataraya, known as Nallan Chakravarti, and Singaramma in a South Indian village called Thorapalli, near Hosur. He had his school education

in Hosur and his college education in Bangalore. He obtained his B.A. degree in 1897. He got married and obtained his B.L. degree in 1899. Enrolling as a lawyer, he rose to the top of his profession at Salem.

Rajagopalachari shifted to Madras (now Chennai) in 1919 to practise as a lawyer. He also intended to take interest in public life and to associate himself actively with politics. He was elected one of the General Secretaries of the Indian National Congress and went to jail as a freedom fighter in 1921.

In 1925, Rajagopalachari founded an ashram in Thiruchengodu, seriously engaging himself in social service, advocating causes like prohibition and abolition of untouchability. He ran an English magazine named *Prohibition* and a Tamil magazine named *Vimochanam* during 1927-28. Once again he was sent to jail in 1931 for participating in the Salt March at Vedaranyam in South India.

Rajagopalachari served as the Prime Minister of the Madras Presidency during 1937-39. Then he became one of the ministers in Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's cabinet. He was appointed Governor of West Bengal in 1947 and the first Governor-General of India in 1948. In 1951 he served as Central Minister for Home Affairs and, in 1952, he once again became the Chief Minister of Madras State.

In 1954, Rajagopalachari was awarded the *Bharat Ratna* and won the Sahitya Akademi Prize for his Tamil version of the Ramayana, entitled*Chakravarti Thirumagan*.

Rajagopalachari founded the Swatantra Party in 1959. He went to America and Britain in 1962 on behalf of the Gandhi Peace Foundation to effect a ban on nuclear weapons tests. On 25 December 1972, he passed away.[1]

Rajagopalachari was a multifaceted personality noted for his myriad talents and qualities, which have been highlighted and admired by many people.

In "Recalling His Greatness," G. Ramachandran states that even when Rajaji's politics may be forgotten, his literary greatness will be remembered by grateful generations for centuries to come *(Facets of Rajaji 50)* .

Jayaprakash Narayan, in his foreword to Raj agopalachari' s *Rescue Democracy from Money-Power,* says that Rajagopalachari "is rightly regarded as the Nestor of modern Indian politics" (9) .[2] He also says that Rajagopalachari " is one of those few great politicians of whom it could be said that though deeply involved in politics, his gaze was much above the battle lines. He had a deep insight into human nature and an astonishing capacity for dispassionate and objective analysis of all national issues" *(Rescue Democracy,* foreword 9) .

In his foreword to Rajagopalachari's *Dear Reader,* the late jurist N. A. Palkhivala comments thus:

> Gandhiji once said[,] "Rajaji sees at least six months ahead of me",[sic] John F.Kennedy described the impact of Rajaji on him as "one of the most civilizing influences since I became President", [sic] (N. pag.)

Monica Felton came to India, met Rajagopalachari, was quite impressed, and wrote a book on him entitled I *Meet Rajaji.* Rajmohan Gandhi, in his *Rajaji: A Life,* comments thus:

> To the skilled eye, ear and pen of Monica Felton are owed a number of vivid glimpses of C.R.[Chakravarti Rajagopalachari] in the late fifties which she incorporated in her I *Meet Rajaji.* Visiting India in 1956, Felton, an Englishwoman with a lame leg, who had written a novel and a travelogue, decided to get to know C.R.—she had heard adulatory as well as 'contrary opinions' about him, listened to a tape in which he

had spoken on Suez, and been struck by his words and 'cool, slow voice' . . . . (367-68)

Vijayalakshmi Pandit, in her foreword to Rajagopalachari's *Our Culture*, writes thus about Rajagopalachari's versatility and capacity to teach:

> Rajaji's impact on the thought of India is an established fact. His contribution has been made on many levels for he is an unusually versatile man. It is difficult to think of anyone better suited to the task of interpreting trends,. and evaluating our capacity to absorb and benefit by them, than Rajaji....([ix])

Jayaprakash Narayan, in "Timeless Teacher of Man," says:

> Rajaji is one of the makers of modern India and architects of her Swaraj . Even at the hoary age of eighty, he has a

political influence on this country which is quite beyond the influence of the party he leads. But it is not as a political leader—though he has reached a supreme rank in that sphere—that he will be remembered by later generations, but as a teacher of humanity. His deep insight into human nature, his extraordinary knowledge, his ripe wisdom, his capacity to make his way through a forest of inessentials and externals to the heart of a problem, all go to make him a timeless teacher of man. It is his commentaries on the ancient classics, Samskrit[sic] and Tamil, his interpretation and exposition of religion, that will give him in history a far more secure place than his political endeavours and achievements.(N.Pag.)

In his introduction to R. K. Murti's *Rajaji: and Work,* K. Swaminathansays: "It is as a

grand teacher, a teacher of teachers, that one likes to remember Rajaji" (viii).

Felton records her close observation of Rajagopalachari thus:

> He was not omniscient and self-absorbed, as the old and famous are said to be and usually are. ... In spite of his extreme old age, the whole of his attention was fixed on the future. He had something to give to it, perhaps more than he himself realized. . . .(4)

In "A Transcendent Personality," K.S. Soundarajan writes about Rajagopalachari the man thus:

> Dignity of expression is a common characteristic of all his speeches and writings. Nor was he a slave to the commonplace virtue of consistency. what was good for the people in a given set of circumstances was the basic consideration

> that weighed with him. That was the reason he could, in the language of a well-known philosopher, be inherently consistent although he might overtly contradict himself. (123)

In "Rajaji, as I Know Him," V.P. Menon states:

> Raj a j i is a man of many-sided, splendour. He is not only a politician, he is a litterateur, a philosopher by precept and practice, a sage and a savant.... He is not a man of the day or of the nation only. He is a moral and intellectual giant of an era and of the world. ... (N.pag.)

In "Our Bheeshma Pitamaha," K.M. Munshi observes:

> Rajaji is an aristocrat of the spirit as well as of the intellect. Astute and subtle, he is also wise, discerning and considerate. He conceals his deep

spiritual fervour under a mask of mild cynicism. (N.pag.)

Highlighting Rajagopalachari's integrity, K. Santhanam, in his "Gandhiji's Truest Follower, " writes :

Rajaji's life has shown that a single individual of conspicuous intelligence and unchallengeable integrity can mould public opinion even more effectively than political parties and newspapers.(N.pag.)

In his " A Purposeful Life," S. Narayanaswamy states:

his [Rajagopalachari' s] writings in the *Swarajya* are awaited with more eagerness than ever before, because they have a remarkable clarity, brevity and incisiveness which can only be the outcome of decades dedicated to thinking on matters impersonal. . . „(N.pag.)

A similar view is expressed by Felton;

> Rajajai wrote at least one article for *Swarajya* every week and often two or three. He would write about anything that struck his fancy, and there seemed to be no subject in which he had not at one time or another been interested. The topics which he wrote about most often were religion and its application to politics, the sins and mistakes of Mr. Nehru's government, and the dangers arising from the manufacture and testing of nuclear weapons. ([25])

In his introduction to Rajagopalachari's *Rescue Democracy from Money-Power,* Chagla states that Rajagopalachari's approach was "direct and forthright" (22). Rajendra Prasad, in "A Unique Personality," says, "if I were asked to say in one word what he is, I should say: he is unique, unique where he agrees with one, unique where he disagrees

with one, unique in his thought and unique in action . . ." (n.pag.).

In "A Symbol of Courage of Conviction," K.K. Shah says:

> Rajaji was a mighty example of an intellectual of a high calibre, becoming the custodian of culture and high standards by accepting the existence of God. In all writings of Rajaji, there is an undercurrent of mature philosophy and high scholarship. It is very difficult for intellectuals to get out of the walls built up by them, as they are afraid of being inconsistent. Rajaji had the courage to modify his earlier views of [sic] circumstances demanded and had the ability and honesty to admit and explain. ([557]-58)

In "Rajaji: Some Sidelights," K. Chandrasekhar an says:

> To him life in all its variedness only emphasized a unity, and hence also his stories were crowded with every form of life like the insect, bird, leaf, animal and gods,—all together playing their ever unmitigating role of masters to teach humanity. (466)

Alladi Kuppuswamy, commenting on Rajagopalachari's short stories in "Rajaji as an Exponent of Hindu Philosophy and Culture," says:

> they achieve the purpose for which they were written, namely, to evoke sympathy for the poor and the downtrodden and to expose the treatment which they received at the hands of society. There can be no doubt they are fine pieces of literature characterized by realism. (498-99)

Acharya J.B. Kripalani, in "Rajaji as I Knew Him," observes:

> Rajaji's literary accomplishment was great. ... he did not forget the children. He wrote for them too. His learning was as massive and solid as that of the old pundits, bereft of their orthodoxy. . . . (71)

In " Raj aj i as a Literary Critic," P. Marudanayagam expatiates on Rajagopalachari' s critical acumen thus:

> With regard to the main aim of literature, he does not subscribe to the view of the Art for Art' s sake school. He is almost Shawian [sic] in his assertion that every work of art should have a purpose - From his writings it becomes quite evident that he would not write a single line if it were not for the betterment of society. . . . (503)

In their preface to *Rescue Democracy from Money-Power* R.R. Diwakar and S. Ramakrishnan say

that Rajagopalachari was an embodiment of simple living and high thinking and that "Rajaji was endowed with prophetic insight and unique capacity to look far ahead of his times . . ." ([7]).

Being a man of such varied traits and talents, it was but natural that Rajagopalachari should leave a compendium of wisdom behind, particularly since he was preeminently a preacher and educator. The fund of wisdom he has bequeathed to humanity is to be found in his voluminous writing and his innumerable speeches. His English writings include: *Chats Behind Bars* (1931) , *Satyam Eva Jayate Vol.1* and *Vol.2* (n.d), *Jail Diary (1922),* Mahabharata (1951), Ramayana (1951), *Hinduism: Doctrine and Way of Life* (1959) , Bhagavad Gita (1963), Upanishads (1963), *Stories for the Innocent* (1964), *Kural: the Great Book of Tiru-Valluvar* (1965), *Rescue Democracy From Money-Power* (1977) , and, *Dear Reader* (1993) .

Besides these writings, Rajagopalachari has left behind a large number of speeches delivered on several occasions. Many of these have been collected as: *Collected Speeches, Vol.1* and *Vol. 2* (1948), *Speeches Delivered By Sri Chakravarti Rajagopalacharya (sic) Governor of West Bengal: 15th August 194 7 to 19th June 1948*, *The Voice of the Uninvolved: Speeches and Statements on Atomic Warfare and Test Explosions*(1960), *Our Culture{1963)* , *Gandhiji's Teachings and Philosophy* (1974), and, in *Chakravarti Raj agopalachari: A Biography of His Vision and Ideas,* compiled by Verinder Grover.

Unfortunately, many works and speeches of Rajagopalachari are lost. Probably because Rajagopalachari wrote or spoke only to teach his countrymen and not as a profession, he himself made no effort to preserve his writings or speeches. The Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan has paid a fitting tribute to Rajagopalachari and done yeoman service to

posterity by publishing some of his works. But some works can still not be traced and are inaccessible to the ordinary scholar. The works thus not available are: *Chats Behind Bars, Satyam Eva Jayate, Vol. 2,* and *Collected Speeches Vol.1* and *Vol.2.*

A critique of Rajagopalachari's available writings is attempted hereunder so as to provide an idea of his vast scholarship, wide range of interests, varieties of subjects, different approaches, varied techniques and varying tones and styles.

Rajagopalachari's *Jail Diary* is a day-to-day record of his life in Vellore jail in 1921 (from 21 December 1921 to 20 March 1922). Raj agopalachari was arrested and jailed for addressing a gathering defying the Government ban on public meetings.
As in all his other writings, there are instances here which show Rajagopalachari

as a humanist, spiritualist, revolutionary humorist and literary artist.

Rajagopalachari writes about the freedom fighters in the jail and their staunch commitment. He records his contact with the criminals and the jail officials. He writes about the atrocities of the jail authorities and the inhuman prison conditions.

Rajagopalachari finds time to read works like the Ramayana, the Bible, *Robinson Crusoe,* the Golden Treasury Series introduction to the *Trial and Death of Socrates*, the *Kural*, and Margoliath's *Mahommed* and to translate Socrates' "Defence."

Since it is a diary, Rajagopalachari's *Jail Diary* carries the writer's personal marks—his illness (asthma and boils in the legs), his nostalgia for his family and relatives, his remarks on fellow prisoners and the jail officials and about the life inside the jail etc. On the whole, as the writer himself claims, this may be preserved

as a "fairly accurate picture" of his life and thoughts from time to time.

The early and predominant portion of Rajagopalachari" s works consists of mythological and religious writings. Rajmohan Gandhi quotes Rajagopalachari's views on Indian mythology from the latter's letter to Mahadev Desai:

> 'I believe with Bapu [Gandhiji] that most of our mythological stories are allegories, including the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. Only I don't believe in the attempts sometimes made to weave a systematic allegory running throughout a book. I think it is a wild collection of isolated and valuable allegories.'(167-68)

Rajagopalachari expresses his views on the Indian epics thus:

> In the moving history of our land, from time immemorial great minds have been formed and nourished and touched to heroic

> deeds by the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. In most Indian homes, children formerly learnt these immortal stories as they learnt their mother-tongue—at the mother's knee; and the sweetness and sorrows of Sita and Draupadi, the heroic fortitude of Rama and Arjuna and the loving fidelity of Lakshmana and Hanuman became the stuff of their young philosophy of life - (Mahabharata [3])

He explains the impact of these epics on arts:

> The characters and incidents of these two *itihasas* have come to be the raw material for the works of numerous poets and saints that came later to write dramas and sing poems and hymns to keep this nation in the straight path. . . . (Ramayana 9)

Rajagopalachari expounds his views on mythology thus:

Mythology cannot be dispensed with. Philosophy alone or rituals alone or mythology alone cannot be sufficient. These are three st[r]ands of all ancient religions. The attitude towards things spiritual which belongs to a particular people cannot be grasped or preserved or conveyed unless we have all these three. . . (Ramayana 8}

He also says:

Mythology is an integral part of religion It is as necessary for religion and national culture as the skin and the skeleton that preserve a fruit with its juice and its taste. Form is no less essential than substance. We cannot squeeze religion and hope to bottle and keep the essence by itself. It would neither be very useful nor last very long Mythology and holy figures are necessary

> for any great culture to rest on its stable spiritual foundation and function as a life-giving inspiration and guide. (Ramayana 9-10)

Rajagopalachari has retold the Mahabharata in 107 stories so as to give Tamil children in easy prose the story of the Mahabharata. A substantial part of the translation was done by Rajagopalachari and a part was done for him by his friends. Sri Navaratna Rama Rao helped in the translation and revision of the English rendering (Mahabharata [4]-[5]). Rajagopalachari comments on the Mahabharata thus:

> The characters in, the epic move with the vitality of real life. It is difficult to find anywhere such vivid portraiture on so ample a canvas. Bhishma, the perfect knight; the venerable Drona; the vain but chivalrous Karna; Duryodhana, whose perverse pride is redeemed by great

> courage in adversity; the high-souled Pandavas, with god-like strength as well as power of suffering; Draupadi, most unfortunate of queens; Kunti, the worthy mother of heroes; Gandhari, the devoted wife and sad mother of the wicked sons of Dhritarashtra—these are some of the immortal figures on that crowded, but never confused, canvas. Then there is great Krishna himself, most energetic of men, whose divinity scintillates through a cloud of very human characteristics. His high purposefulness pervades the whole epic. One can read even a translation and feel the overwhelming power of the incomparable vastness and sublimity of the poem. (Mahabharata[5]-6)

He proceeds to say:

> The Mahabharata discloses a rich civilization and a highly evolved society

> which, though of an older world, strangely resembles the India of our own time, with the same values and ideals.... We read in the Mahabharata of standardized phalanxes and of various tactical movements. There was an accepted code of honourable warfare, deviations from which met with reproof among kshatrias. The advent of the Kali age is marked by many breaches of these conventions in the kurukshetra battle, on account of the bitterness of conflict, frustration and bereavements. Some of the most impressive passages in the epic centre round these breaches of dharma. (Mahabharata [5]-6}

Rajagopalachari glorifies the epic:

> The Mahabharata has moulded the character and civilization of one of the most numerous of the world's people. . . .By its gospel of dharma, which like a golden

> thread runs through all the complex movements in the epic; by its lesson that hatred breeds hatred, that covetousness and violence lead inevitably to ruin, that, the only real conquest is in the battle against one's lower nature.(Mahabharata 7)

Rajagopalachari's Ramayana is the English rendering of his own earlier composition in Tamil. He originally wrote the Tamil version of the Ramayana in a series of weekly chapters in *Kalki.* It was received warmly in the homes of the Tamil people all over the country. So another series appeared in English almost simultaneously in the *Sunday Standard.* Rajagopalachari's friend Sri Navaratna Rama Rao revised the English rendering for publication in book form. While writing the Tamil original, Rajagopalachari had very young readers in mind, which is the reason why he often pauses in the course of the narrative to moralise. While presenting the English version to readers all

over the world, Rajagopalachari says: "I think I am presenting to them the people of Bharat just as they are, with all their virtues and their faults . . ." (Ramayana 7-8).

In *Hinduism: Doctrine and Way of Life,* Rajagopalachari seeks to present the body of faith called Vedanta to the readers. He emphasises that a spiritual code ought to guide science and statecraft, particularly in view of the disharmonies involved in these phenomena. Warning against the practice of cherishing contradictory principles in the minds of people, Rajagopalachari says that a code of ethics and a system of values evolved by Hindu philosophers out of the religious philosophy known as Vedanta will ensure a stable social organization and a regulated economy. He asserts that the basis of Vedantic philosophy anticipated the socio-economic problems of the present and that, therefore, adherence to it can save men from the unending struggles of life.

Rajagopalachari urges that the first step in the teachings of Vedanta is the realisation of the Supreme Spirit within everyone. He explains the first cause of the universe—both spiritually and scientifically—and urges getting rid of the illusion caused by worldly life. Expounding the relation among the body, the soul and the Supreme Spirit, he asks men to 'wake up' from sleep i.e., to dispel the ignorance of attachments. Describing the law of cause and effect known as 'karma', he urges men to tread the path of renunciation.

Rajagopalachari asserts that a spiritual foundation is necessary to shape our words and deeds. He declares that, with such a foundation, our socio-economic life will improve significantly.

Rajagopalachari has said in the *Hindustan Times* dated 21.11.1950, "'The Gita ... is like a railway guide. You should travel with its help, not commit it to memory'" (Rajmohan Gandhi 317). The Bhagavad Gita was written by Rajagopalachari to

serve as a handbook for Indian students of India's great religious philosophy (Gita [9]). In this book, Rajagopalachari presents a discussion on the nature of the soul; the effect of karma on the individual soul; the relation between God and the physical elements of nature; the need for right action; the practice of mind control, which is essential for maintaining a detached attitude; .the art of meditation, which is essential to develop an attitude of indifference to pleasure and pain and to secure serenity of mind; the need to look into one's inherited propensities; the need for genuine repentance and prayer to obtain God's grace; the deteriorating effects of godlessness; the need to set good ideals, austerities and food system for oneself; the identification of the individual soul with the Oversoul; the doctrines of Advaita and Gita discipline; Arjuna's divine vision of God; and, a summation of the above mentioned aspects.

To illustrate his exposition, Rajagopalachari quotes selectively some original Sanskrit verses from the Gita.

Rajagopalachari's *Our Culture* is a collection of his lectures on culture, in book form, in which he speaks about the sum total of the way of living built up by groups of human beings and transmitted from one generation to another *(Culture* [1]).

Rajagopalachari says that civilization has two instruments to curb the sensual instincts—Government which uses physical force to compel people to restrain themselves and culture which acts through family training, religious belief, literature and education *(Culture* 4).

Culture and character are like peel and fruit which must grow together from tiny beginnings to the ripe state. Humility, avoiding vices and harsh words go to make culture *(Culture* 6-8)- In the case of Indian culture, there is a deliberate preference

for simplicity and a conscious rejection of the complicated life.

Emphasis on the element of culture may vary from country to country, but it will not affect the value of the element. Rajagopalachari speaks about the joint family system, the system of marriage, the prevalence of the jaati (caste) discipline., as found in Indian life as components of the Indian cultural set-up.

Rajagopalachari talks about the prevalence of virtues like honesty, hospitality, charity, philanthropy, tenderness to dumb animals, aversion for evil and love to do good in the Indian culture. He attributes the sense of values of Indians to spirituality and its components like sacrifice and austerity.

In the Upanishads, Rajagopalacahari explains the teaching of the Kathopanishad, the Isavasyopanishad, the Kenopanishad, the Svatasvataropanishad, the Taittiriyopanishad, the

Chhandogyopanishad and the Mundakopanishad, in simple English, quoting relevant slokas from the original Sanskrit version. Rajagopalachari sets out, with suitable narrations and examples from the original Upanishadic teachings, to explain the indestructible nature of the soul; the incessant working of the Supreme Spirit; the function of the 'Brahman'; the realisation of the true nature, of God, matter and soul; the supremacy attached to food, the nature of *sat* which is the cause of the universe; and the two sciences of learning and realization of the Ever-existing.

In *Stories for the Innocent,* a collection of short stories by Rajagopalachari, there are thirty seven stories, of which the first sixteen were translated by his son, C.R. Ramaswamy and another seventeen were translated by Professor P. Sankaranarayanan. Only four of the stories were written originally in English by Rajagopalachari himself. Among these four stories "Uttara

Kanda-Revised" is only a dramatic rendering of an episode from the Ramayana. Hence, only the remaining three stories that were written originally by Rajagopalachari in English as stories have been taken for the present study. Besides these three stories, "Rayappan," a short story by Raj agopalachari published in *Indian Thought—A Miscellany* has been taken for the present study.

Rajmohan Gandhi comments:

> None of his short stories ... is without a moral. Often they tell of the ruin that liquor or untouchability or caste arrogance brings. All breathe irony and most are sad but a few amuse as well. . . . (431)

Rajagopalachari himself says about his stories in *Stories for the Innocent:*

> Most of these stories were written not by an author aspiring to be an author but for furthering the public causes in which he

> was involved. ... I wrote them for the causes I held dear but I held fast to the skirts of Mother Truth even when writing stories. . . . ([ix])

Most of the stories in *Stories for the Innocent* take place in the suburbs or villages around Salem District, where the author himself was born, thus providing an autobiographical tinge. Rajagopalachari campaigns against liquor and deforestation in some of the stories. " A Pair of Sandals" depicts the sanctity attached by rural folk to their traditional vocation and the material and the tools associated with it. Songs, most of them composed by the author himself, are introduced in order to intensify the thought communicated. Dreams occur in most of the stories, giving vent to psychological stress.

In these stories, most marriages take place in Tirupati, most of the villagers are affected and die of cholera, and, interestingly, most of the

elite send their wards abroad to study and get through the I.C.S. examination. So the stories are obviously period-based and the characters are stereotypical. That Rajagopalachari was basically a lawyer is to be noted in places where he mentions the rules of law and legal proceedings. Through some bold variations of the puranic stories, by mingling divine characters with mortals and by telling about some unforgettable incidents in his own life, Rajagopalachari succeeds in teaching morals through his stories.

Rajagopalachari's *Kural—the Great Book of Tiru-Valluvar* contains couplets selected from the Tamil original and translated freely without adhering to the requirements of Tamil prosody, so as to enable the readers to follow the meaning easily. There are totally eighty four chapters with 586 couplets out of the 1080 couplets from the first and second books of the *Kural.* There are instances of an intermingling of couplets from different chapters

of the Tamil original, resorted to by the author to suit compilation under specific headings. These couplets instruct men on the art of living, covering all aspects including, dharma, friendship, self-control, forbearance, compassion, renunciation, prohibition, true knowledge, labour, niggardliness, nobility, just rule, valour, citizenship etc. Rajagopalachari provides effective illustrations and explanations.

Rescue Democracy from Money-Power contains Rajagopalachari's political writings under two heads, "Rescue Democracy from Money-Power" and "Towards Genuine Democracy." The articles in the book convey Rajagopalachari's views on election procedures, party funds, defections, administration, opposition, education, parliamentary democracy, national welfare, national character etc.

Rajagopalachari hits out at the Congress Party's greed to collect party funds from

companies, its enormous election expenditure, its desire to remain in office, its policy of excessive taxation etc. He proposes some innovative and revolutionary methods to correct the corrupt practices. Of particular significance is his advice to reverse the election procedure by making a mobile van collect the votes from the voters' residence and for temporarily displacing the party-government during the election campaign etc.

Referring to the issue of defections, Rajagopalachari maintains that one need not always be in the same party on the basis of ideology and advises the Law Ministry to consult non-political jurists before making proposals to help political leaders.

For effective administration, Rajagopalachari advocates a strong Opposition, without which, to him, the constitutional structure is only half-built. He condemns corruption in any form in a parliamentary democracy which has acquired the

impression of the best form of government. He welcomes a pluralist party structure as opposed to single-party control over Indian affairs. He also proclaims that national character, which is founded on individual honesty, is essential for national affairs.

Rajagopalachari's *Dear Reader* is a volume of his weekly colloquy with the readers of *Swarajya,* the mouthpiece of his Swatantra Party, during a period of twelve years from 1961 to 1972. In his foreword to *Dear Reader,* the late N.A. Palkhivala says, "This anthology of Rajaji's writings shows that the sweep of his mind was matched only by the range of his reading. His vision was almost uncanny . . ." (n.pag.) .

In *Rajaji: Life and Work,* R.K. Murti observes:

> He [Rajagopalachari] contributed a regular column entitled, *Dear Reader,* to *Swarajya* magazine. The weekly column provided the arena where Rajaji could soar freely and

> express himself frankly on any topic under the sky. He enjoyed this freedom. He enriched his comments with gems of wisdom. (155)

From the above mentioned works of Rajagopalachari, only five books—*Jail Diary, Hinduism: Doctrine and Way of Life, Stories for the Innocent, Rescue Democracy from Money-Power* and *Dear Reader*—have been selected for analysis in the present study. Rajagopalachari's Ramayana and Mahabharata are condensed and retold English versions of the Indian epics; his Bhagavad Gita and Upanishads are condensed and retold versions in English of the Hindu scriptures; and his *Kural* is his free translation and arbitrary rearrangement in English of selected verses from the famous Tamil moral treatise *Tirukkural*. Since these works were not written originally in English by Rajagopalachari, they have been excluded from the present study. Most of the short stories in *Stories*

for the Innocent were originally written by Rajagopalachari in Tamil and translated into English by others. So they are excluded from the present study.

Rajagopalachari, both in his writings and speeches, seeks to educate and enlighten the people rather than to amuse or enchant them. He himself has said, "'I have written books, stories and fables. But on the whole I am not a man of letters. I have written mostly for causes—propaganda for the abolition of untouchability for instance'" (Rajmohan Gandhi 429).

As K.T. Narasimhachari, in C. *Rajagopalachari: His Life and Mind* observes:

> He was not content merely to garb the glories of Indian thought and literature, at the peak of their performance, in present-day language. He made it a mission of his life to continue to spread the message of his Master, Mahatma Gandhi, to

> his own countrymen and to the world. For he was the one man among all the lieutenants of the Mahatma who followed the Gandhian way of life in thought, word and action. . . .([1])

In "Rajaji as a Literary Artist," R. Bangaruswamy says: "Rajaji, it is clear, never wrote, because he must write, but wrote because he had something to say, something which spurred utterance . . ." (96). He also observes that a sense of high seriousness always marked Rajagopalachari's writings.

Malcolm S. Adiseshiah, in "An Educator with a Difference," sees Raj agopalachari primarily as a teacher:

> A teacher is what a teacher does—and that was what Rajajai was as a teacher. He lived his teachings—of clarity in thought, of comprehensiveness in scope, of simplicity and integrity in communication,

> and of sympathy, affection and charity in his affective interpersonal relations. His teaching was always an outpouring of a clear, deep and penetrating analysis of whatever problem he was dealing with.. .. As a teacher, his subjects covered a wide range, as wide as life itself . ranging from the Gita to the Atom Bomb, from the importance of the mother tongue and one foreign language, English, to prohibition, was down [sic] from the original source book which the teacher tends to forget, namely, life. . . . ([565])

Rajmohan Gandhi says:

> His [Rajagopalachari's] journalistic writing mixed exhortation with observation. The former impinged more on the public consciousness—often it was strong, compelling and controversial

> stuff. But the latter possesses a sharpness and a sweep that would strike any student of writing. . . . (430)

Iyengar, in "As a Man of Letters," comments on Rajagopalachari[7]s skill in story-telling thus: "when Rajaji tells his story, he lets us forget him. He is not there at all! It is the story-telling itself, or rather enacting itself . . ." (99). In *The Great Indian Patriots,* P. Rajeswar Rao says that "His [Rajagopalachari's] statements were couched in sauve[sic] but firm expressions" (289).

Raj agopalachari's style in both English and Tamil was acknowledged universally as simple, specific, scientific, persuasive and at times dogmatic and legislative on issues on which he held strong views, like untouchability or prohibition.

Alladi Kuppuswamy, in "Rajaji as an Exponent of Hindu Philosophy and Culture," observes:

> His [Rajagopalachari's] works are marked by clarity and economy of expression. No

single word is wasted. Every word has a meaning and purpose. The language is the language of truth, no doubt very often unpleasant—and there is no exaggeration of any kind. . . .(501)

Bangaruswamy observes:

Be it a description, a narration or a. summing up or clinching the issue in a few words Rajaji shows himself to be a superb artist. And yet he never cared for style for the sake of style. His style is the style of not mere words or ideas but of the inner man's himself, his personality, his soul. The words come spontaneously without effort as do the rain drops from the sky now gentle now in a downpour. (96)

Sri Prakasa, in "A Leader with Unerring Vision," writes about Rajagopalachari's use of parables and illustrations:

> Rajaji has the uncanny knack of being able to put a great deal in a small compass. With the help of parables and illustrations from the everyday occurrences of life which are within the experience of the most ordinary human beings, he is able to explain complicated issues, and drive home like the preceptors of ancient India, the truth, practicality and desirability of the.propositions that he is putting forward. . . . (N.pag.)

Murti observes that Rajagopalachari's style has been decocted "by a subtle blend of words and logic . . ." ([148]) . He goes on to comment on Rajagopalachari's artistry: "Words behaved in his presence like soldiers on the drill. Every word knew its allotted place, its defined motions and movements . . ." (149).

m his *"Chakravarti Thirumagan* by Rajagopalachari," K.S. Krihsnan praises Rajagopalachari's style thus:

> Whether he writes on *Rural* or Kamban, on the Gita or the Upanishads, on the Ramayana or the Mahabharata, on Ramakrishna or Marcus Aurelius, on physics or on politics, on the coining of technical words or on BCG vaccination, whether he tells a parable or a short story, one cannot help being impressed by the precision and clarity of his thought and expression. There is a certain purposiveness pervading his writings and the parts cohere logically with the main theme„ Indeed the logical sequence of thought is almost compelling, and reminds one of the sequence of propositions in a book on geometry. (106)

Krishnan adds :

> these qualities of Rajaji's prose style can be traced in some measure to the background of his early scientific discipline. It is possible that he owes this chaste and austere style to the author of the *Kural,* of whom he is more than an admirer, but his English style, which has some of these merits, had acquired its distinctiveness before he started serious writing in Tamil. (106-07)

Rajagopalachari often quotes the original Sanskrit words and verses from the scriptures, both in his writings and speeches, as a means of emphasising his points. In *Hinduism: Doctrine and Way of Life*: "All work . . . should be done honestly and disinterestedly for *lokasangraha*—welfare of the community . . ." (34) . And in *Our Culture,* he says: "Humility is the essential part of true culture—vidyaa *vinaya sampanne braahmane* (Gita V 18)" (7).

In appropriate contexts, Rajagopalachari uses snatches of the great Tamil poet Bharati's songs, translated, to enrich the ideas projected. He also uses a number of similes and comparisons to explain a single point.

Rajagopalachari never spares a chance to urge the unity of religions even in his political writings like *Dear Reader* and *Rescue Democracy from Money-Power.* He has a tendency to bring in the teachings of the Gita to emphasise his points.

According to the exigencies of the situations Rajagopalachari's language becomes free or tame, as observed in *Dear Reader.* There is often a likeness to Bacon's' aphorisms when Rajagopalachari pronounces his views on various topics.

Rajagopalachari is a humorist as stated by Felton in *I Meet Rajaji.* When Felton asked Rajagopalachari what the difference between the mind of the British female and that of the other females was, Rajagopalachari replied:

'It is not really very great. All females of whatever species have much the same characteristics. It is easier for female animals to understand other females of different species than to understand males of their own.' (117)

On another occasion, Rajagopalachari said to Felton: "'Fashion in ideas . . . are like fashions in clothes. If you stick to them, sooner or later they come around again'" (152). Once when Felton told Rajagopalachari that his friends had been telling her that he was a modern Socrates, he responded humorously: "'Socrates asked questions. I always seem to be answering them. Besides, such a notion is like comparing a comet with a safety match'" (49).

Rajagopalachari's iterative style can be seen in a passage which he wrote in July 1966, as quoted by Rajmohan Gandhi:

> 'As long as there is suffering in the world, as long as there is the great curiosity to unravel truth, as long as men and women have some intense desire to be fulfilled, as long as there is wisdom in this world, the future of religion is assured.' (429)

Bangaruswamy comments on Raj agopalachari'' s characteristic style thus:

> To a lover of letters Rajaji is [a] treasure house, satire and sarcasm are there. Irony, imagery [,] figures of speech, plenty of home spun similes, metaphons[sic] etc; all coming as it were unasked at the right time and place. (96)

Rajmohan Gandhi quotes a passage written by Raj agopalachari in the *Hindustan Times* dated 07.11.1948, which bears testimony to his skill in providing eclectic allusions:

> 'Could any man on earth conceive the dance of Siva if he did not see God behind all the diversities in this world? Could anyone paint the Ajanta frescoes if he did not believe with all the strength of his soul in love and compassion? Could any one have given- us the Taj unless he loved as greatly as Shahjahan did?' (302)

Rajagopalachari's skill in resorting to effective comparisons is illustrated by Rajmohan Gandhi. To Rajagopalachari., the English language was "'the airline all over India,'" that provided "'immediate means of communication at higher levels'" (301). Rajagopalachari thought that correcting the educational system was "'like trying to repair a railway train while it is in motion' " as it would not be possible to " 'close all schools and think quietly for a year'"(301).

There are so many instances of Rajagopalachari's sarcasm in almost all his works.

For instance, in *Dear Reader*, while writing about the Kashmir issue, which was regarded as a key component of the Indo-Pakistan imbroglio, Rajagopalachari says that Kashmir "is not a piece of real estate property," and adds that "it is absurd to seek to intimidate Abdullah to refrain from expressing what he feels about affairs" *(Dear Reader* 201;203). He goes on to comment:

> Oliver Twist is being reenacted in New Delhi and the humour of it is not realized. Sheikh Abdullah is asked to be content with a spoonful of liberty and the Government of India is horrified at this asking for more. (Dear *Reader* 205)

That Rajagopalachari has a flair for preaching can be seen in *Hinduism: Doctrine and way of Life:*

> Leaving aside the weak and the hypocritical who teach one thing and practise another, if we reflect on the actual lives of the great and good

> Vedantins who lived in the light of the truth that they saw, it will be evident that they took this world and this life and the law of *karma* to be hard realities. If still they taught the doctrine of *maaya,* that everything is an illusion created by the Lord, what can that teaching mean? It can only mean that the apparent with its false values is different from the real. . . .(65)

Rajagopalachari quotes from literature also in his speeches to illustrate and emphasise his arguments. When talking about humility, he says: "Humility is not the humility of Uriah Heep, but what makes the other man feel easy with you though you may be definitely superior to him" *(Our Culture* 7). When he says that avoiding vices like meanness, dishonesty and cruelty goes to make culture, he quotes Aunt Betsey's words to David in Charles Dickens's *David Copperfield:*

'be a credit to yourself, to me and Mr. Dick, and Heaven be with you! Never be mean in anything; never be false; never be cruel. Avoid these three vices, Trot, and I can always be hopeful of you.' (qtd. in *Our Culture* 8)

While talking about the discipline effected by one's community, Rajagopalachari says: "There is a whole chapter in the *Rural* about one's duties to his people in the sense of the *jaati* circle. All this is found in the corresponding chapters of Samskrit [sic] literature . . . " (Our *Culture* 18) .

Felton comments on Rajagopalachari's English thus: "He treated the English language gently, as if he loved it . . ." (4). To Lord Mountbatten, who had written to Rajagopalachari praising his English, Rajagopalachari said in his reply dated 03.12.1966:

'I am flattered. I attribute whatever I have done with English to a Globe edition

of Goldsmith's Complete Works and a *Spectator* volume giving ail the essays of Addison, Steele and his colleagues in that journal. I read these two books voraciously at the age of 16 and enjoyed it.' (Rajmohan Gandhi 413)

In "Remembering Rajaji," K. Natwar Singh says: "His [Rajagopalachari's] style was archaic but free of prolixity or pugnacity. He took his literary work most seriously . . ." (459).

In *Rajaji and Gandhi,* B.K. Ah-lowalia and Shashi Ahluwalia state:

> Rajaji had the knack of presenting the most abstruse philosophy of[sic] a difficult scientific theory in simple and lucid language intelligible to the average man. Rajaji had contributed an article to the Bhavan's Journal on Sir C.V. Raman and explained his Raman Effect, which had baffled the understanding of many

scientists, into such simple language that a layman could understand it. Similarly he has explained the meaning of *Vedanta* in the book *Hinduism, [sic] Doctrine and Way of Life* in a very simple language. (161)

Rajagopalachari's speeches are no less important than his writings. Capturing his readers with his skill in writing, he appeals to his audience vehemently with the gift of his clear voice and the style and content of his speech, Acharya J.B. Kripalani, in "An Ideal Satyagrahi," comments on Rajagopalachari's skill in debate thus:

> Rajaji is not an orator, but he is an effective public speaker. He is clear in his thought and lucid in his expression. . . . whenever Rajji wanted to convince me about the correctness of his views, I told him that I did not want to enter into an argument with him. His debating skill reminded me of a story in which a man was

> charged of having committed a murder. After the prosecution counsel had argued the case against him, the accused told the judge that he had not committed the crime, but hearing the argument of the prosecution counsel he felt that he could have done so. (N.pag.) . ..

Felton records the smooth and strong effect of Rajagopalachari's voice:

> In Calcutta I had attended a conference organized by the Indian Peace Council. There I had listened to a tape-recorded speech which Mr. Rajagopalachari had made about the Suez crisis, and had been much struck by the beauty of his cool, slow voice and the incisive directness of his language. . . . ([1]}

Rajmohan Gandhi says: "In the Central Assembly, which he [Rajagopalachari] faced as a Minister, he was helped by his clear voice" (273) and quotes

from the *Hindustan Times* dated 13.04.1947: "'Mr. Rajagopalachari has the best microphone voice on the Government benches. ... He particularly shines in answering supplementaries' " (273) .

Bhimanesh Chatterjee, in *Thousand Days with Rajaji,* comments on Rajagopalachari's public speeches thus:

> Rajaji minced no words in his public speeches. His firmness of conviction was clearly evident in his words which suffered no ambiguity, and retained a consistency irrespective of the class of listeners. His didactism and the incisive comments on some of the prevailing lapses of the society occasionally invited criticism, and sometimes even incurred the displeasure of some of his old colleagues. But that did not deter him from giving vent to his personal views and impressions, which any other person of his

> eminence and privilege would have surely avoided under the convenient plea of discretion. In Rajaji's view, "discretion" had its norms too and must depend on the peculiarities and diversities of each situation. (58)

Murti talks about Rajagopalachari's clear-cut style in his speeches:

> Rajaji faced his audience with confidence. He spoke to them in a simple, easy-to-follow style. He did not confuse them, but helped them step by step so that they could trail behind him as he lit the misty corners of doubts and dispelled doubts. He gave them fresh insight into diverse fields of developments. He subtly drew the central theme of his speech by rich allusions and references to the matters of original thoughts. (153)

In "A Rare Spirit," Mountbatten observes:

> One of the most remarkable things about Rajaji was his eloquence and ability to make impromptu speeches at short lish [sic] —far more efficiently, I may add, than any Englishman could normally hope to do. (N.pag.)

Iswara Dutt, in "A Moral Colossus," comments thus on Rajagopalachari's skill as a speaker:

> With no tears to shed he has fought, sometimes with some behind him and sometimes all alone, but never has he compromised on any issue. And he has done the fighting without malice and with clean weapons, often the only weapon being the tongue which speaks great language, giving the clearest expression to the thoughts that perennially spring from a capacious mind-(N.pag.)

Dutt goes on to say:

He has exercised his mind, as few men of his generation have done, on the most bewildering variety of subjects, from the dangers of nuclear weapons to the evils of political patronage. For beauty of exposition of a theme or invincible argument in controversy, he has few equals and no superior in our annals. It has always been a marvel how by his parables he could make so immediate and so sure an appeal to his hearers and what heights he could reach by a simplicity of language, almost Biblical alike in its texture and fervour. (N.pag.)'

Anantarama Dikshitar, in "Divinely Endowed," comments on the content and the hypnotic effect of Rajagopalachari's speeches:

Every one of his speeches contained gems of thought, over which I used to reflect at leisure and cherish them as a treasure.

> What truths are embedded in our Dharma Sastras, Neethi Sastras and Artha Sastras, and what our sages have enshrined in the scriptures flow from Rajaji with an amazing ease in every one of his talks. In a composite crowd of differing faiths and divided followers, Rajaji"s sagelike utterances find universal acceptance, a feat not possible for ordinary humans without the touch of divine inspiration. Sincerity is the keynote of all his utterances. He does not speak what he does not believe in. What he says out of conviction invariably turns out to be also true.... (N.pag.)

Rajagopalachari displays a distinct skill in using analogies in his speeches. An example, as quoted by Rajmohan Gandhi, is:

> 'Those claiming special rights as they had made sacrifices for freedom are like cooks

> who say that they have sweated near the fire and will therefore eat all the food themselves. The dishes of independence are for the enjoyment of everybody.' (288)

Rajagopalachari/s emphasis on precision in language use is noteworthy, as seen in *Our Culture:*

> We should not use words vaguely. Whatever language we speak, we should try to be precise with our words. When we say a man is a cultured man or that he is an uncultured person, we don't mean to say he is a good man or a bad man. The two things are different. *Good* is different from *cultured.* . . . ([1]— 2)

Rajagopalachari adds:

> Near ideas going by the same name cause greater confusion than well-recognized multiple senses of the same word. The nearer two different ideas are to one another, the more important is the

> difference to be kept in mind. It would be good always to give different names to different things so as to keep the ideas clearly defined and distinct as in the case of the letters denoted by the symbols in the Nagari script. . . . (*Culture* 14)

Hardly any systematic and in-depth assessment of individual writings and speeches of Rajagopalachari has been attempted. Most of the assessments available are overviews and general comments only. Several of them are actually part of tributes paid to Rajagopalachari on occasions like his birth or death anniversaries. So they cannot constitute rigorous literary criticism or assessment of Rajagopalachari's writings and speeches. However such comments do certainly point to some salient features of Rajagopalachari's language, style and technique, which are worth rigorous investigation. That is why the present

researcher has quoted extensively from these commentators.

Since the present study is a pioneering attempt at assessing Rajagopalachari" s contribution to Indian English prose, the present researcher could not but quote extensively from his original English writings and speeches to illustrate the salient features of his language, style and technique.

This thesis is organised as hereunder.

The first and introductory chapter presents a bird's eye view of the development of Indian English prose upto the time of Rajagopalachari. It presents a brief biography of Rajagopalachari and mentions his public life. It lists Rajagopalachari's works, both available and non-available, and offers a critique of the available works in chronological order. It surveys the available comments on his works and on the salient features of his writings and speeches. It

also mentions the limitations of the study, which can be attributed to the absence of systematic and literary assessment of Rajagopalachari's writings and speeches. The second chapter analyses *Hinduism: Doctrine and Way of Life* as a piece of ethical and religious writing by Rajagopalachari. The third chapter evaluates *Jail Diary* as a piece of prison writing by Rajagopalachari. The fourth chapter analyses Rajagopalachari's short stories written originally in English, viz. "Rayappan," "A Pair of Sandals," "Hats and Sarees" and "The Tree Speaks," and his article "The Development of Indian Literature" as samples of his creative and critical writing. The fifth chapter assesses *Rescue Democracy from Money-Power* and *Dear Reader* as Rajagopalachari's political writings. The sixth chapter analyses Rajagopalachari's speeches published under the titles *Speeches Delivered by His Excellency Sri Rajagopalacharya (sic) Governor of West Bengal: 15th August 1947 to 19th June 1948,*

The Voice of the Uninvolved: Speeches and Statements on Atomic Warfare and Test Explosions, Gandhiji's Teachings and Philosophy,. Our Culture, and the speeches compiled in *Chakravarti Rajagopalachari: A Biography of His Vision and Ideas* by Grover. The seventh and final chapter sums up the previous chapters and points to topics for further research suggested by the present study.

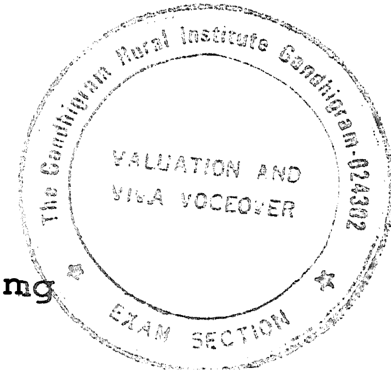
A list of the works cited is appended to the thesis.

This thesis has been documented according to the guidelines provided by the MLA *Handbook for Writers of Reserarch Papers* by Joseph Gibaldi, 4th edition (New Delhi: Affiliated East-West, 1996).

Notes

[1]The same biographical details are to be found in *Rajaji: A Life* by Rajmohan Gandhi, *Rajagopalachari: His Life and Mind* by K.T. Narasimhachari *and Bharata Ratna Rajaji* (in Tamil) by Seeni. Viswanathan. .

""In Greek mythology, Nestor is the oldest and wisest of the Greek chieftains in the Trojan war.



Chapter 2

Religious and Ethical Writing

In his religious and ethical writing, Rajagopalachari explicates the important teachings of Vedanta, the relevance of Vendanta to the contemporary world, and, the value of Vedantic teachings to modern man. He urges that spiritual values should guide both science and statecraft and that spirituality must be an indispensable part of everyone's life.

Rajagopalachari maintains that Indian philosophic speculation travelled to ancient Greece and influenced Hellenic thought and that the faiths that inspired the literature and philosophies of Greece and Rome absorbed and assimilated Vedantic currents from India {*Hinduism* 12; 20) .

In *Hinduism: Doctrine and way of Life,* Rajagopalachari, as he says in the foreword, "seeks

to present the body of faith called Vedanta to those who are not familiar with it . . (*Hinduism* 13) . Rajagopalachari maintains that, while agnosticism may do no harm and, on the contrary, may do much good to the minds of an enlightened few that find satisfaction in it, among the masses, skepticism inevitably and steadily leads to positive denial and that a divorce between action and moral responsibility follows, which is not good either for the present or for the future generations (*Hinduism* 13-14).

Rajagopalachari regards Vedanta as a panacea for the problems of mankind—ancient as well as modern:

> Vedanta is a faith as suitable for modern times as it was for ancient India, and more especially so, as the world is now fully and irreplaceably permeated by the discipline and knowledge that have come to

> stay through science and are bound to grow as time advances (*Hinduism* 13-14).

This is especially relevant in view of the prevailing folly in the contemporary attitude towards knowledge, which Rajagopalachari points out:

> When our minds dwell on scientific research and studies, we implicitly accept certain truths. It is a mistake to believe that by a mental fiat these accepted axioms can be dismissed and forgotten when we deal with God and the things of religion. Neither truth nor the human mind is so docile as to submit to such unnatural repression. . . . (*Hinduism 23*)

Rajagopalachari associates Vedanta with modern scientific trends on the basis of what the Gita says about freedom, for, he states: "All this that was written in the Gita is remarkably anticipatory of the copious modern literature about repression

and suppressed complexes" *(Hinduism* 95). He argues that religions that contradict the conclusions of science cannot but degenerate into formalism and hypocrisy and that economic reorganization must be based on the stable foundation of widespread moral faith and culture *(Hinduism* 101). He asserts:

> Vedanta offers a religious faith that can have no quarrel with the scientists who work in the laboratory or with the geologists who do research in the history of the physical world, and yet it offers a firm spiritual foundation for the just polity of a new world. *(Hinduism* 101)

Rajagopalachari suggests what modern man must do to solve the problems of the present generation:

> Previous generations had simpler problems, but it must be admitted that they grappled with them more courageously and with a greater spirit of adventure than we seem inclined to show in tackling our more

> difficult problems. This weakness is unfortunate, whatever the causes. We should not, however, despair but, drawing inspiration from our forebears, summon all the spirit we can command to restore basic harmony of thought and to make all necessary modifications in our fundamental beliefs and axioms for that purpose.
> (*Hinduism* 23)

He explains the need for such a revolution: "The spiritual value of things depends on the price paid for them in suffering and sacrifice. An easily achieved revolution has not the same psychological virtue as one paid for in blood and tears- . . ." (*Hinduism* 36) . He further explains how a Hindu must look at Vedanta and religious practices:

> Vedanta is the common heritage of the people of India in whatever denomination they may happen to have been brought up. . . . Names and images whether mental or

> sculptured, even the sacred and mystic syllable "Om" itself, are but crutches to help the faltering fleet [sic] of infirm faith on the way to realization-mere aids to concentration, and protection against doubts and distraction. . . . *{Hinduism* 41)

Rajagopalachari adds:

> The tradition in Hinduism is that it is not open to any Hindu, whatever be the name and mental image of the Supreme Being he uses for his devotional exercises, to deny the existence of the Gods that others worship. . . . The fervour of his own piety just gives predominance to the name and form he keeps for his own worship and contemplation, and he treats the others as Gods deriving divinity therefrom. ... It makes no difference in the content of

> Vedanta to which all devotees equally subscribe. {*Hinduism* 42-43)

Rajagopalachari enunciates the true message of Vedanta, particularly in view of popular misconceptions about it:

> it is not the cult of the fugitive from battle, but of the strong man armed, who puts his trust in God, and does his duty. Although this distinction was clearly made so long ago and in such an authoritative scripture as the Bhagavad Gita, the confusion still persists and it becomes necessary to reiterate it in the middle of the twentieth century of the Christian era that it is a mistake to identify Vedanta with retirement from life and its activities. . . . Vedanta does demand renunciation, but that is renunciation of attachment, not of work or duties. . . . (*Hinduism* 45)

Rajagopalachari declares:

> If we accept the law of cause and effect with its extension to future births, then if we live the Vedantic life, the growth of evil will be stopped. The souls that will inhabit the future world will progressively rise to a higher state. (*Hinduism* 98)

According to Rajagopalachari, the Vedantic code of spiritual values and the Vedantic culture will help to preserve a sense of individual liberty and initiative in the midst of complicated State regulations which the baser elements of society try to exploit and turn into an opportunity for illegal gain either of power or wealth (*Hinduism* 19). He explains:

> the furnishing of a code of spiritual values through religious faith and practice would reduce the strain, minimize the flaws in execution and produce a

> happier integration of thought and action which by itself would be a priceless gain and a source of strength. *(Hinduism* 29)

Rajagopalachari asserts that Vedanta is not. Incompatible with science.

> It is a remarkable achievement of intellectual imagination—it would not be incorrect to call it inspiration—that the rule of law in science was anticipated in the ancient Hindu scriptures- The God of Vedanta is not an anthropomorphic creation with human capriciousness and desire for power—a conception against which the veriest tyro in modern science can launch a successful attack. . . . According to the Bhagavad Gita, the sovereignty of God is exercised in and through the unchangeable law of cause and effect, that is, through what we call the laws of nature- *{Hinduism* 30-31)

Rajagopalachari declares that Vedanta anticipates contemporary sociological and economic ideas too:

> The profit-motive and the civic right of private competition were definitely asked to stand back in favour of a rule that everyone should work for social welfare, as clearly set out in the Bhagavad Gita. We are now told by social and economic reformers that the State should see to it that men and women work without aiming only at personal gain but with an eye also to the welfare of the community. And that this is just what the Bhagavad Gita laid, down. . . . Indeed, the Gita lays down in a unique manner the whole socialist doctrine by characterising work as a religious offering in the trust sense. . . . (*Hinduism* 33-34)

According to Rajagopalachari', Vedanta is inherent in the Indian ethos:

> All culture in India has been rooted in Vedanta. Whatever courage, heroism, self-sacrifice or greatness is to be found in our history or seen in the lives of our people has sprung from Vedanta which is in our blood and tradition. For Vedanta is undoubtedly a living philosophy of life in India, a part of the mental structure of our people. The people of India get it not from study of books but from tradition. It is in the air, so to say, of India and Asia. .. . . {*Hinduism* 37) .

Urging the ultimate value of Vedanta, Rajagopalachari says:

> If the postulates of Vedanta are accepted, the Vedantic ethic is spiritual eugenics. The object of right living to a Vedantin is twofold; one's own true happiness and

> one's contribution to a better world irrespective of disconnection in memory when we are re-born . . . . If we live detached and dedicated lives as Vedanta lays down, the world will be peopled by better men as time goes on. . . .
> (*Hinduism* 98)

Rajagopalachari's views on inter-religious issues are highly relevant today:

> Conversion would mean asking them to give up the use of names, symbols and rituals in which they were brought up from childhood and inducing them to adopt a new set of names, symbols and rituals. At the same time, people who follow one religion should understand the other religions professed by their fellow citizens. Most certainly, atleast the religion of the vast bulk of our people which necessarily influences the life of the nation, should

be understood by those who have been following other faiths. . . . (*Hinduism* 14)[1]

He also says:

> The philosophy of Hinduism has taught and trained the Hindu devotee to see and worship the Supreme Being in all the idols that are worshipped, with a clarity of understanding and an intensity of vision that would be a surprise to people of other Faiths. . . . (*Hinduism* 87)

Religious zealots can derive enlightenment from Rajagopalachari's expostulation of the genesis and growth of religious fervour:

> Names of gods do not make religion any more than the names of men and women make up their personality. Names are originally given and used without any idea of comparison or contrast with other names. They are handed down by tradition. Custom

> gathers fragrances and associations around them that are not perceived by any but those who have for generations been brought up in the use of those names. Each name by which the Most High is known is hallowed by the ecstatic religious experience of seekers, and gathers round itself the light and fragrance and the healing strength born of the rapturous adoration of generations that have sought and found Him. . . . {*Hinduism* 12-13)

In *Hinduism: Doctrine and Way of Life,* Rajagopalachari uses a very simple and modern analogy to explain the immanence of the universal spirit:

> it is the air in the football that jumps and functions in all manner of ways when the ball is knocked about in the field. Yet we forget the air, and we look on the ball as the thing we play with, not the

air. What is all-pervasive and invisible is lost in the obvious tangible hard reality, the ball. (66)

That the Oversoul inspires every human soul is explained by Rajagopalachari through a very mundane analogy:

> we have seen several departments deriving existence and authority from the same Government above and functioning through the single and entire power of that Government, but opposing, wrangling with and sometimes even over-reaching one another! In a somewhat similar manner every soul is inspired by the *Paramatman*—the Overall Soul—and functions as a separate entity. . . . (*Hinduism* 67)

The phenomenon is further explicated by Rajagopalachari through another analogy:

> The sun shines on the water. When the surface of the water breaks into ripples,

we see numerous little suns on the water. The individual souls are like the reflections of the sun in the water. If there be no water, there are no reflected images. In the same way, the individual souls are the reflections of the Supreme Being on the ocean of *maaya* and they ' _ . become one with the Supreme on the removal of that *maaya. . . .* *(Hinduism* 71-72)

Rajagopalachari again resorts to analogy to counsel how to find release from this *maaya*:

A man has a dream. He is distressed by what he goes through in the dream. How can he escape from that distress? Relief can come only through waking from sleep and realizing that he was dreaming. Similarly, we must wake up from the separation that deludes the soul and liberate ourselves from our sorrow. . . . *(Hinduism* 74)

Using an analogy, Rajagopalachari shows what the relationship between the individual and the Supreme Spirit ought to be:

> The relationship between soul and body, as well as that between the soul and the universal ever-existent Causeless Spirit, is a mystic relationship in which tool and craftsman are merged in inextricable fashion. The body and the subtle senses within it should be loyal to their master, the soul, and serve as good and just tools. Even so, the individual should be a good and loyal instrument for the Lord who dwells within and should dedicate every act, thought and word to Him. (*Hinduism* 78)

The effect of all our acts is explained by Rajagopalachari through an analogy:

> The smallest pebble or even a grain of sand thrown into water produces a ripple.

> The disturbance is carried onwards in ever-widening circles on the water. Similarly all our acts and thoughts produce a disturbance of the universal calm. The most transient or secret thought entertained in the mind ruffles the great calm and the disturbance has to be worked off. *(Hinduism* 83)

Rajagopalachari compares hypocrisy to " a consuming internal fever which is worse than an obvious and acute distemper" *(Hinduism 22).* He compares fleeting worldly pleasures to "a credit account in a bank" *(Hinduism* 39). He calls the law of karma "the Magna Carta of free will" *(Hinduism* 80) .[2] He presents a tenet of the Southern Ramanujites in a simile: " Like a mother cat carrying its young one, God takes up the sinner that surrenders himself completely to Him . . ." *(Hinduism* 86)-

Rajagopalachari warns against the moral deteriorations caused by disharmony between religious activities and practical affairs, by two metaphors put together.

> The injury done by disharmony is to the mind, which is the thinking and feeling machine,—the very engine-room in the power-house of human energy. When the engine is damaged, what else can we expect but serious injury to the cause of human progress? Even if we look upon civilization as a business concern, its most precious capital asset is the sum-total of the minds of its men and women. The depreciation to which this asset is subjected by reason of the chronic contradiction of principles is ruinous. . . . (*Hinduism* 25)

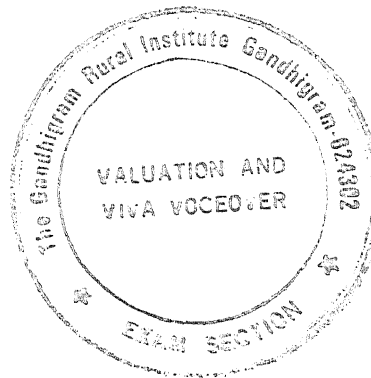
Rajagopalachari visualises the Vedantin metaphorically as "a soldier in the world's army in

a totally non-martial but no less heroic war agoinst [sic] evil, the more heroic since he seeks no personal reward" *(Hinduism* 99). To highlight the danger of accepting contradictory ideas simultaneously, Rajagopalachari says, " We cannot employ untruth as a servant without paying the heavy wage it demands, viz., spiritual death . . ." *(Hinduism* 25) .

Rajagopalachari employs sarcastic language to condemn the hypocrisy that corrodes civilization:

> The reign of relentless private competition, the right to make maximum private profit at the expense of others and the exploitation of every advantage got by accident or acquired by enterprise, so that the differences between man and man may grow in geometric progression, are all plain denials of Christ. For the execution of deep-laid plans based on the so-called fundamental right to private

competition, gigantic corporations equal in respectability to the Church and far richer, grander and more awe-inspiring than the Church's most impressive manifestations are established under the authority and protection of democratic States. Yet, almost every citizen of those States is a Christian or belongs to some other faith equally opposed to inequality and exploitation. . . . (*Hinduism* 26-27)



Notes

[1]There is a similar idea in *Gandhiji's Teachings and Philosophy* (21) .

[2]The same idea on rebirth is to be found in Raj agopalachari's *Our Culture* (26).

Chapter 3

Prison Writing

The Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan introduction to its publication of Rajagopalachari's *Jail Diary* provides the background of the diary: In 1919, one of the Rowlatt Bills, the Anarchical and Revolutionary Crime Act, had become law and it provided for the arrest of whomever the Government suspected of sedition without trial or enquiry. Gandhiji wanted people to resist this oppressive legislative measure and, as a result, a country-wide hartal was observed successfully on April 6, 1919. Infuriated by this, the Government let loose a reign of terror through police firing, which was seen at its worst at Jallianwalabagh in Amritsar on April 13, 1919, killing 379 persons and injuring 1100. On September 1920, a proposal of non-cooperation was adopted at the special session of

the Indian National Congress in Calcutta. The non-cooperation programme was approved at the regular Nagpur session of the Indian National Congress in December 1920 and Rajagopalachari, who played an important role in the Indian National Congress constitutional reform, was elected one of the General Secretaries of the Indian National Congress at the session (ii-iii).

The introduction also states that thousands of Congress workers and leaders of the Indian National Congress, including C.R.Das, Motilal Nehru, Lajpat Rai and Jawaharlal Nehru courted arrest in November, following a country-wide hartal against the visit of the Prince of Wales, on 21 November 1921. Since Rajagopalachari was one of the General Secretaries of the Indian National Congress, the non-cooperators in Madras were persuading Rajagopalachari not to court arrest. But Rajagopalachari thought it would demoralize the people if he withdrew from disobedience.

Consequently, he addressed a gathering of 5000 people on 14 December 1919, defying the ban on public meetings. He was arrested. While in jail, he maintained a diary, i.e.,from December 21, 1921 to March 20, 1922 (iii).

The introduction goes on to comment:

> The diary is not a sentimental record of a gregarious lawyer finding himself lonely in a prison. It is a record of events in his personal life as well as reflections of national developments of a mature mind. . . . *(Diary* iii)

The introduction adds: •

> Rajaji's 'Diary' is a part of the history of the country, a document of great value testifying to the patriotic urges of a people straining at the leash. It is also the testament of faith of a warm-hearted person, bold, resolute, self-sacrificing and, above all, wise beyond his

generation. Rightly has he been hailed as the Nestor of India and also as Bhishma Pitamaha, the grandsire of Mahabharata who combined wisdom with self-sacrifice.

{*Diary* iv)

In *Jail Diary*, adopting a Thoreauvian attitude, Rajagopalachari says, "I feel it is a delightful place. The fear is only for people outside jail . . ." (*Diary* 2). Healso says, "The man who goes to prison in revolt against foreigner's law is free, even like the rebel soldier. He is to be held down by force, not byshameful, voluntary surrender . . ." (*Diary* 5) .[1] He speaks of the freedom fighters who have come to jail, the people still outside jails and what they ought to do, the treatment meted out to the freedom fighters in jail and its consequences, including occasional moments of weakness, the deplorable and inhuman prison conditions, the strength he himself drew from religion, non-violence and non-cooperation. He also

makes a prophetic pronouncement of the dangers in store for post-independent India. As usual with him, Rajagopalachari finds occasions to reiterate the Gita's teaching of selfless service. *Jail Diary* even has instances of Rajagopalachari's sense of humour.

Rajagopalachari argues that freedom for India will come through the prison gates:

> if men and women of India embrace prison life . . . as to a haven of rest, from the painful condition of national servitude outside the prisons, then there is freedom for India through the prison gates. . . . Even if there be no immediate national advantage resulting from it, each individual has the supreme consolation that he at least has released himself from the sin and pain of voluntary assistance in keeping this nation in servitude. . . . (*Diary* 14)

Rajagopalachari names some freedom fighters who are in the jail with him, underlining the fact that young students like Lakshminarasimha Rao and Venkatasubbiah were jailed for "refusing to give security" and prisoners like Mahomed Ghouse displayed extraordinary courage and fortitude (*Diary* 3; 7) .

Rajagopalachari is sore with the Indians outside the jails for their indifference towards the freedom fighters who have courted arrest for the cause of the nation:

> Their innocent undoubting trust in their brethren outside, on the strength of which they have left aged mothers and loved children for doing penance in the jails, is a thing not yet realized fully by the people. Otherwise they would not be so indifferent or so slow. Robinson Crusoe, after some time in his island, gave up looking out for any ship in the horizon.

> Have these too to abandon hope, like
> Crusoe? *(Diary* 5)

Rajagopalachari goes on:

> I get confirmation for my suspicions that there was some sort of agitation outside about my food and health in jail. . ..
> Our hunger and,thirst are, for more and more men to come into the jail. ... I wish they realized that we are here for a cause which demands their immediate attention independently of our own food and comforts in jail. . . . *(Diary* 36)

Rajagopalachari criticises the attitude of the Government towards the freedom fighters and its consequences:

> Government seem either indifferent or determined deliberately to treat us like common criminals in every way. . ..
>
> But we are not going to break for all this treatment. Government does not know

> that this merely enhances our sacrifice, and strengthens our determination. Special comforts would undermine our strength in a subtle manner. *(Diary* 4)

He adds:

> We have an opportunity in prison to bring out the best in our principles and extort the admiration of the ignorant and the illiterate, and even of those at first ill-disposed towards us. . . . *(Diary*8)

However, at times, prolonged imprisonment disillusions some freedom fighters and weakens their will, as Rajagopalachari records in his *Jail Diary:*

> There is no place where the atmosphere is so full of expectancy as the jail. Every prisoner, as he is heaving up a heavy load, or finds a minute's rest when running down to the latrine, asks, how long are we to toil like this? When is

Swaraj coming? Are we winning? Where is Ghandhi? And so on. (12)

Rajagopalachari quotes a typical conversation he had with a carpenter who was in jail:

"When will all this end, sir?" "Soon," said I, "we should wait. But what is it you want to come to an end?" "When will what they all say is coming—Swaraj-come? When will this system stop by which they take three rupees worth of work from us everyday and give food without enough salt, and whole dal which is not boiled, and all for half a man's stomach?" *(Diary* 18)

Rajagopalachari confesses that he himself experienced momentary weakness in jail but quickly mastered it:

After lock-up to-day, as I sat inside the cell, an involuntary feeling of weakness and thoughts of my children seized me. It

> looked at first irresistible, but I struggled against it. Help came to me soon. "Have not people lived away from their dear ones for months and years on business and been perfectly happy? Have you not yourself been away thus? It is the mere thought that you are in prison that weakens you." I put these questions to myself and I gathered strength. *(Diary 1)*

Rajagopalachari comments sarcastically on the treatment of the prisoners in the jail:

> Slave labour has not been abolished. The whole system of jail administration is but a scheme of slave labour at its worst. Work is extracted from thousands of able-bodied men without being paid for, by the sanctions of pure brute force and cruelties, free from public observation or criticism. Even where cattle may and must be used, as for pressing oil or drawing

> the kavalai, a gang of men are made to do the work, because the slaves are available in such large numbers. . . .
>
> (*Diary* 12-13)

Rajagopalachari's sarcastic criticism continues thus:

> But not only is reformation absent, but it is almost an article of the creed of all jail authorities that the convict is beyond moral redemption. No attempt whatever is made to reach his higher feelings or his soul. Indeed, nobody seems to believe that any convict has higher feelings at all or a soul. Therefore, I say, it is a mere factory for slave labour, giving the absolute minimum of food, and intending to get maximum work. The slaves are not owned, but hired for a limited period. So here is no abiding interest in their health or morals, but

> the largest use is made of them and good conduct is ensured only for the master's purpose, during a limited time, by strict overseeing and barbarous penalties, rather than by instruction or example, which are slow and tedious. The officials are typical slave drivers, the convicts are typical slaves. How can there be any moral development or regeneration in these circumstances? *(Diary* 13)

Rajagopalachari sarcastically condemns a specific incident of man's inhumanity to man in the jail:

> I was pained to the quick to see an exhibition of brutality on the part of the Sub-assistant Surgeon who, for some cause which I did not perceive, wrung the ears of a moplah patient. To the brutality was added the ridiculousness of this little man armed with brief authority by a

> foreign Government and secure in the secrecy of a prison, imposing his little physical strength on a brave soldier who is probably here after risking his life before the machine guns of Government's military forces, and is placed under the little man's charge because he is sick. {*Diary* 22)

Rajagopalachari's sarcasm, aimed at the prison conditions, reaches its climax thus:

> It is a fine art in cruelty to make the gangs of prisoners work in the jail gardens and produce all kinds of nice vegetables, but give them tamarind soup in which float only fibrous bits of stalk and leaves of radish all the year round. What happens to the other things that are grown, whether they are lost in the systematic robbery of officials or sold

> for money to contractors and high
> officials, I cannot tell. . . . *(Diary* 44)

During his sojourn in jail, Rajagopalachari turned to spirituality for strength, as he records in his *Jail Diary:*

> I daily do the *Gayatri* a hundred and eight times after nightfall. It was at first difficult to concentrate. But I find it easier every day. I hope to grow strong enough, by communion with the Highest, to break these prison bars. God has given me this great opportunity to purify and strengthen myself. ... (7)

According to Rajagopalachari, religion not only strengthens the prisoner but also promotes communal harmony, because, as he records, the convict 'overseer' Parasuraman has finished his Ramayanam and lent the book to him; he has taken the volume of Tamil Mahabharatham from him; and, Muhammood Hussain is studying the Gita and is doing it with

great diligence and respect (*Diary* 23). Another instance of religion inspiring communal harmony is to be found in Rajagopalachari's remark: "How beautifully does my neighbour Md.Ghouse' s 'la ilia'' mix with my own silent prayer! Yet, how the two communities hated, warred with, and killed each other, and how much misunderstanding still continues!" {*Diary* 68) .

Rajagopalachari states the rationale of non-violence thus: "When we are out to conquer our enemy by showing up the worthlessness of his weapons, it is best to grapple with his worst weapons and disarm him straightaway" (*Diary* 84). He further explains:

> The purest determination and freedom from all stain of anger on our part is necessary to produce the beautiful effects of suffering and love. The human soul is a delicate mechanism and its workings are as

perfect and accurate as those of any electrical machine. . . . (*Diary* 53)

Rajagopalachari records how he attempted to convert a fellow-prisoner named Hira Singh who did not believe in non-violence:

I tried to put it to him how (1) we were not fit for force, (2) we were not fit for civil self-government unless we were able to organize a non-violent revolt, and (3) how if the violence of a few people ever obtained freedom from foreign domination, it would result only in the government of India by a few people commanding such violence, whereas a non-violent revolution would naturally lead to true self-rule by the people of India. . . „ {*Diary* 18-19)

Rajagopalachari cites an incident in the j ail, wherein the jailor, who had attacked Subba Rao for defending a fellow-prisoner, came to apologise for

his brutal behaviour, to prove that non-violence can convert a hardened heart:

> I called in Subba Rao, who came and bursting into tears, said, "I sincerely tell you, I do not mind your beating me or kicking me. Pray God bless you. I could not bear to see a fellow prisoner treated brutally by the convict warder. I am so happy that I am receiving blows on that account. I am only sorry you did not beat me more." A warder, a young fellow put on office duty to help the remission clerk, began sobbing for sheer sympathy. Then the Jailor said, "I am sorry for what I did. . . (*Diary* 49-50)

In *Jail Diary* Rajagopalachari authoritatively asserts that non-cooperation with evil or wrong is notmerely a means to an end, but a perennial and universal human duty:

Non-co-operation is not a means to a political end, but a Dharma by itself. To abstain from co-operating with wrong is an absolute duty. This is so, not simply because thereby we shall evict the Englishmen. It is an absolute duty, to release one-self [sic] from the net of wrong in which one is entangled. It is not a programme for the time being, or for any particular period in politics. It is a duty for all time to refuse to participate in the degradation of one's people, whether you succeed in enfranchising them within the period fixed by the Congress or not. It is not a desperate remedy resolved upon because other remedies have failed, but an absolute and eternal moral duty even as honesty and charity are duties irrespective of result or occasion. To refuse to co-operate in the process of

> reducing ourselves to foreign rule and in the maintenance of it is the natural law and instinct. We forgot this law of national life, and cast our minds into the terrible slough of unfelt slavery. Now that we have re-discovered the rule of life, it is our duty, absolute and for all time, to obey it. (34-35)

With a wise prophetic vision, Rajagopalachari ions Indians thus:

> We all ought to know that Swaraj will not at once or, I think, even for a long time to come, be better government or greater happiness for the people. Elections and their corruptions, injustice, and the power and tyranny of wealth, and inefficiency of administration, will make a hell of life as soon as freedom is given to us. Men will look regretfully back to the old regime of comparative justice, and

> efficient, peaceful, more or less honest administration. . . . (*Diary* 43)

In conformity with his writing practice, in *Jail Diary,* Rajagopalachari cites and recommends the code of selfless service preached by the Gita:

> Even if we achieved nothing in our generation, we had a duty which we should cheerfully perform. Freedom is often attained by the sacrifices of successive generations, and we should therefore be prepared to lay at the altar of the country what we could give or suffer without hungering for immediate fruit, --even if we do not feel we are able to reach the Gita ideal of duty without concern for results altogether. Think where we should have been if our fathers and grandfathers had made definite sacrifices for freedom's sake. Would we not have then carried forward the battle

> with greater faith and vigour? By our sacrifices we have at least made the history of India in this generation an honourable chapter, a relief from the continuous story of surrender, indifference, and dishonour. Even this is an inheritance for our children. So let us not lose faith. (23)

Even when writing a diary in a jail, Rajagopalachari's sense of humour does not desert him. Rajagopalachari records that once, while he was drinking only the water from his morning 'cunjee' after giving away the rice to a scavenger, the Chief Warder came there with a grin and Rajagopalachari told him that he was taking his morning coffee and adds by way of comment, "This was a joke pitched low enough for his sense of humour" *(Diary* 8). Rajagopalachari makes gentle fun of the limited and stilted English vocabulary of Nidan Singh, a Sikh cook in the. prison thus:

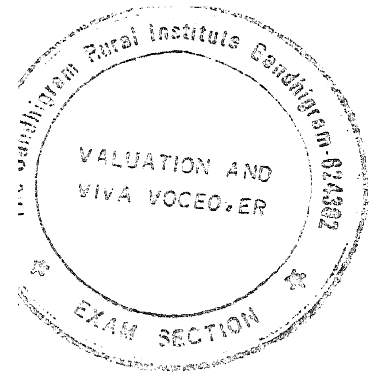
> 'Can' and 'May' are about only the two English words I can recognize when he speaks. The rest is all something which only his brave heart conceives and understands—not I. I must make one exception. I discovered by a process of persevering induction that 'pay' in Nidan Singh's vocabulary means 'give'. He pays dal, he pays chappati, the deputy jailor pays vegetables and other rations. . .. (*Diary* 32)

Rajagopalachari makes effective use of simile in his *Jail Diary* when he compares the Indians outside jails to "dogs let loose by the master" and the freedom fighters inside jails to "tigers kept inside barred cages" (6). As illustrated earlier in the chapter, Rajagopalachari gives free rein to his sarcasm when recording the inhuman conditions prevailing in British jails in India.

Note

[1] Henry David Thoreau, in his "Civil Disobedience," says:

> I have paid no poll tax for six years. I was put info a jail once on this account for one night; and, as I stood considering the walls of solid stone, two or three feet thick, the door of wood and iron, a foot thick, and the iron grating which strained the light, I could not help being struck with the foolishness of that institution which treated me as if I were mere flesh and blood and bones to be locked up. I wondered that it should have concluded at length that this was the best use it could put me to and had never thought to avail itself of my services in some way. . . . (126-127)



Chapter 4

Creative and Critical Writing

Rajagopalachari's creative and critical writing consists of four short stories and one article.

As mentioned in the introductory chapter of the thesis, only three stories from *Stories for the Innocent* and one story published in *Indian Thought: A Miscellany* were written originally in English by Rajagopalachari and only these four stories are evaluated in the present study. An article by Rajagopalachari published in *Indo-English Prose Selections* is also evaluated.

In the short story, "Rayappan," Rajagopalachari exhibits astute awareness of child psychology, particularly the child's inability to understand the reality, by depicting the protagonist's inability to understand his stepmother's attitude:

> gradually differences arose between the boy Venkataraya and his stepmother. A

> reasonless dislike grew and ripened. She beat him for being disobedient. He went to his father crying, and he too cursed and beat him. The boy was puzzled. If anyone stoned or beat a street dog and it ran away howling, Venkataraya would say, 'Poor dog! It suffers as I suffer,' and stand watching it for a long time. (4)

"Rayappan" is an eloquent discourse on motherhood and the duties of a foster mother. As Rajagopalachari explains in his record of a discussion on the story between him and the editor of the Tamil journal *Ananda Vika tan,* a woman who gets a little girl as daughter-in-law, a lady engaging a little servant for wages and the aristocrat bringing up a little pup are all taking on the role of a foster mother. In fact, Rajagopalachari asserts, that any entity with a growing body and mind and any man or woman who takes over the responsibility of tending it assume

the relationship of child and foster mother. Rajagopalachari declares that the only natural love in the world is that of the mother and that it is a model for other kinds of love(11).

In "The Tree Speaks," resorting to anthropomorpia, Rajagopalachari makes a tree speak in human language in order to drive home his oft-repeated preaching that it is the perennial and universal duty of human beings to fight against evil, and wrong. In "The Tree Speaks," Col. Ray Johnson, retorting to his wife's statement that no one will see the felling of a tree from his angle, says:

> 'But surely, surely, when a wrong thing has been done, and you feel it, to suppress your resentment and to stifle protest is to let evil grow unchecked. Civilization and humanity call for the free expression of one's resentment.' (240)

Rajagopalachari' s short story, "A Pair of Sandals," highlights the sanctity attached by rural people to their traditional vocation and the material and the tools related to them. While spreading the message of prohibition in the village of Maniyanur, Rajagopalachari confronts a suspected offender though the suspect and his father perversely deny the allegged offence. When Rajaji asks them to swear on his leather sandals that they are not guilty, both the father and the son impulsively admit that the son had indeed committed the crime. Subsequently, every inhabitant of the village, with Rajagopalachari/s sandals in hand, takes an oath never to touch toddy again (Rajagopalachari, "A Pair of Sandals"- [248] -51) .[1] Rajagopalachari aptly comments: "Country sandals are not merely useful things for one's feet. They embody the bread and the faith of poor cobblers. One has to tread lightly and reverently in them" (251) .

In "Hats and Sarees," Rajagopalachari makes mild fun of the brahmin priests of Parvatipur, "where breaches of caste were more heavily taxed" than at the I.C.S. officer Kaushika's previous station. The priests, once the terms had been settled as they wanted, "were all accommodation" regarding the shraddha ceremony for Kaushika's father and "promised to omit all but the essentials and do the thing at mail train speed" ([243]) .

In his article, "The Development of Indian Literature," Rajagopalachari evaluates the achievements of Indian literature in different genres and comments on the same.[2] Rajagopalachari says that the atmosphere and the life and the activities of the people during any period in question provide scope for poetry in any country and that retrospective thought always finds poetic expression in any age and on any theme irrespective of the current conditions ("The Development of Indian Literature" [32]) .

Rajagopalachari says:

> The prospect of poetry in any country depends on the atmosphere, that is the life and activities of the people during the period in question. Retrospective thought may find poetic expression in any age and on any theme without reference to current conditions. . . . poetry that truly belongs to any period, depends very greatly on current emotions. The characteristics of a particular period in a country's history may be wholly unsuitable to that delicate form of literature which is called poetry, . . . Struggle, adventure, distress and heroism give birth to poetry. . . . ("The Development of Indian Literature" [32])

While talking about drama, Rajagopalachari states that drama is not to be found in mere

conversion of prose into conversation and colloquialism and adds:

> What we mean by dramatic literature is not the spoken material that just joins up the moving shadows on the silver screen. It should be words worthy of being read and re-read as, for instance, the plays of Shakespeare are. All may not be Shakespeares, but the example helps to indicate what we mean by dramatic literature. . . . ("The Development of Indian Literature" 33)

The substance of fiction, according to Rajagopalachari, should not be a reproduction of life in other countries, but should have bearing and relevance relative to the current life in one's own country. It must have a realistic basis from one's own country and not from another country as seen through their literature ("The Development of Indian Literature" 33).

About historical writings, Rajagopalachari says that the record in the form of diaries will be far egoistic to be helpful to historians and that age-long untidiness and negligence in this respect have made good history difficult if not impossible in India. Rajagopalachari goes on to assert that propaganda is not history ("The Development of Indian Literature" 34) .

While discussing the themes of literature, Rajagopalachari says that the pathos of poverty is an easy line and hatred should not be the theme, since literature should not aim to produce what is evil. Be it in poetry or drama or prose story, distress and sadness should be handled so as to purify the mind. Rajagopalachari, in his characteristic vein, suggests that our creative efforts must shape things of beauty and power for coping with evil and they should not be an added stimulus to the debasing forces around us, for,

there is enough of evil around us and inside us

("The Development of Indian Literature" 34-35).

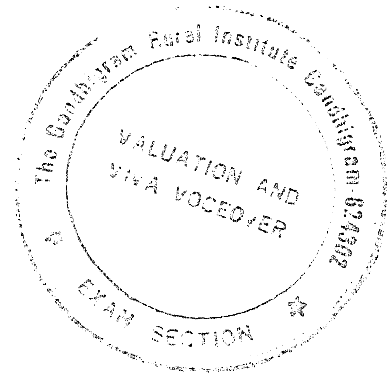
Notes

[1]In Bhabani Bhattacharya's novel *So Many Hungers!,* when the British Indian Government, enforcing a scorched earth policy in the face of a Japanese threat of invasion through Bengal, orders that all fishing boats be scuttled and burnt, the fisherfolk go to great lengths to save their boats, and, when, despite these efforts, their boats are seized, broken up and offered at a nominal price for firewood, no fisherman, and no peasant either, wants to buy the wood and, after the wood is all burnt to ashes by the Government personnel, each fisherman picks up a handful of the ash and ties it to the corner of his dhoti (51-58).

[2] Rajagopalachari's literary criticism is seen also in his *Dear Reader* (348-52).

Chapter 5

Political Writing



Rajagopalachari's *Rescue Democracy from Money-Power* is a collection of articles authored by him and published mainly in his Swatantra Party organ *Swarajya.* In it Rajagopalachari expresses his opinion on several political issues like the party system, democratic governance, corruption, party funds, election expenditure and related ethical principles like honesty and the unity of religions. He also expatiates on the role of education in moulding the citizen.

In the article "Enriching the Party Chest," Rajagopalachari hits out at the ruling Congress Party for voting out in the Lok Sabha a proposal to stop the practice of collecting 'donations' from companies. He points out that some members of the Congress Party were ashamed of it, but the Congress Party itself was shameless *(Rescue Democracy* 34).^

Poking fun at the Congress Party's devious proposal for a ceiling on 'donations', Rajagopalachari says:

> The ruling party has undertaken to put a ceiling on this form of corruption! We may as well pass a law that a government official may take no more of bribes in a single instance than the amount of the official's salary for one year. Moderate corruption is worse than moderate drinking, for which pro-alcohol people plead so vigorously. *(Rescue Democracy* 34)

Rajagopalachari, a sagacious statesman as he is, warns against the danger to democracy latent in such devious practices:

> A party that gets into power will, by reason of this practice in the context of a 'developing economy,' be enabled to accumulate enormous funds, which can defeat all the purposes of the law restraining corrupt practices at

> elections. It can perpetuate itself for all time in a country where votes are easily bought, leaving only violence as a means to change governments. *(Rescue Democracy* 35)

In the article "Voters and Ballot Boxes: Reverse the Procedure," Rajagopalachari criticises the collection of election funds by the Congress Party as violative of the related legislation:

> . The current Congress Party collections bear no relation to the limits prescribed in the People's Representation Act. The Party probably plans suitable manipulation 'to fit the statutory requirements'. (Rescue *Democracy* 38-39)

Rajagopalachari suggests a reversal of the electoral procedure in India in order to make it effective and also to curtail corruption:

> The ballot-box should be taken to the voter at State expense instead of asking

> the voters to go to the booths. The procedure of census operations should *mutatis mutandis* be adopted at elections. Mobile polling booths should serve the people instead of asking voters to move to the polling stations and making ineffective laws to regulate the engaging of conveyances by candidates and parties. This revolutionary change will, in the net result, be less expensive to the nation than the present competitive private industry principle forced on candidates. And there will be less scope for corrupt practices. . . . *(Rescue Democracy* 39)[2]

In the article "State Neutrality in Elections," Rajagopalachari analyses the malady that has overtaken the ruling Congress Party:

> The ruling Party's present internal distractions and difficulties are mainly due to the expensiveness of election

campaigns and the consequent total dependence of its adherents on the party's funds and the party's position and power. A scheme to make the elections less expensive and less corrupt will not only help the country but help the Congress Party itself to shed its sickness. (*Rescue Democracy* 47)

With admirable political astuteness, Rajagopalachari explains that the malady afflicting the ruling Congress Party threatens the national psychology itself:

> the illness of the Congress Party has an effect beyond the fortunes of the party. Much as we may like and try to treat the malady as appertaining only to the Congress Party, the national psychology suffers along with deterioration of the Congress Party. Changes in procedure adumbrated to make elections less

> expensive, in order to save democracy from becoming merely a facade to cover a perpetuated one-party rule, are of greater importance to the nation than may at first appear. *(Rescue Democracy* 47)

Rajagopalachari criticises the Congress Party for opposing good ideas and perpetuating wrong practices on the ground of presence or absence of precedents in Western democracies:

> Wrong doing cannot, however, go on for ever. Nemesis is awaiting. There is a natural law that brings Evil's downfall by its own weight. . . . "There is no precedent for this in Western democracies," they say. There is no precedent for all that the Congress Party is doing to perpetuate its own power through the opportunities enjoyed when holding office, particularly through the Planning programme which gives it a long-

term mortgage over the will of the voters.

. - - (*Rescue Democracy* 54)

In his article "Polluting Encrustations," Rajagopalachari vehemently criticises the power of party bosses in Indian democracy:

> Wrong becomes right by usage and convention. The Constitution has given no place to the party system and certainly no place for the coercion imposed by party leaders on members of Parliament. The justification for control and coercion is that it is the price paid for the advantages enjoyed by the members through the influence of the group acting together. . . . present day leaders of democracy are corrupted by power and have become insensitive to the deterioration that has happened. They are keen supporters of what is called 'discipline', that is to say of voting irrespective of

> conviction. This has become a vested interest of the leaders of parties. Loyalty to party should be based on conviction and not coercion, although disloyalty as a result of bribery must be relentlessly put down. The freedom of a member to express his own opinion on matters arising from time to time will not damage a party's strength or influence but will add to its good image. *{Rescue Democracy* 73-74)

In his article "Prospects of Democracy in India," Rajagopalachari pronounces a pluralist party structure as essential for a democracy and warns against the prevailing Indian trend towards a kind of totalitarian one-party governance:

> Experience has taught us that political liberty is in jeopardy in all such arrangements whatever be the justification. Soon the rule of law comes

to an end, the independence of the judiciary evaporates and the press becomes subservient. Trade unions and other sectional organizations, as soon as they assert themselves, come under the strict regulations of the party in power. There may be differences and discussions inside the party where the leader sagaciously allows it, but it is monolithic all the same. The more powerful section inside always prevails and does not permit any opposition to be active or express itself publicly and acquaint the people with its views. It is given no opportunity to canvass public support. Such canvassing would be treason and sooner or later the prison accommodates the dissidents.

(Rescue Democracy 75)

In his article "Public Expenditure and National Welfare," Rajagopalachari makes some eloquent pronouncements on good governance:

> Progressive taxation is an emasculating deceiver. We must cut our coat according to the cloth. Let us remember in the application of the maxim, the cloth is a living sentient thing, not dead or anaesthetized matter. Costly preparations for war are of no real use in the present condition of the world. . . . Let us gather the courage of peace and righteousness and save our resources from being wasted-on what is called defence and spend them for the improvement of the daily lives of our men and women which would be truer defence. . . . (*Rescue Democracy* 79)[3]

In his article " National Character," Rajagopalachari urges individual honesty as the

essential constituent of national character, which, to him, is the keystone of national affairs:

> Individual honesty must be brought into being before we can hope for improvement of our national affairs. It is the drops that make the rain. It is no use saying 'I shall be good after I make enough for myself'. If each one continues to be dishonest, to better his affairs by wrongful means, the national character will not revive. ... It is the totality of the character of each individual that makes what we call national character.
> *(Rescue Democracy* 81)

In the article "Education *vs.* Literacy," Rajagopalachari asserts that education is useless without character:

> Education is real only if it confers on the recipient the capacity to know and

> choose Good and the strength to reject Evil.
>
> Choosing by itself, if it stops at mentally distinguishing Good from Evil, is not enough. Most people, even the most uneducated among us, can distinguish Good from Evil—thanks to the many millennia of our civilization emphasizing *dharma.* What is wanted is the capacity to choose in the real sense, to be prepared to work and to suffer for that choice. . . . *(Rescue Democracy* 66)

In the article "The Evil of Defections," Rajagopalachari comments wisely on the Presidential proclamation dated 16.04.1968 dissolving the Uttar Pradesh Assembly:

> The Governor is the Central Government's nominee and known to be acting as its agent from hour to hour receiving instructions therefrom- . . . The

authority conferred on the legislatures to form governments is a constitutional privilege which cannot be administered except by themselves. The Governor should act as observer and not as one who can intervene in the interests of what is called stability. The Article of the Constitution authorizing the imposition of President's rule on a State does not refer to the stability of any proposed ministry. What is the standard measure of time for stability, no one can define. (*Rescue Democracy* 56-57)

In *Rescue Democracy from Money-Power* Rajagopalachari writes in his usual clear and cutting style, but is careful not to be too severe, because, most of the time, the subject is the ruling Congress Party and the attitude is critical, while his motive is a statesman's and not a politician's. It may well be said that *Rescue*

Democracy from Money-Power is meant to educate all Indians politically rather than to put forth Rajagopalachari's own political ideology or to expose the Congress Party to ridicule. So he consciously tempers his customary sarcasm to a great extent, for instance, in the passages referring to the Congress Party cited above.

Occasionally, Rajagopalachari introduces mild humour in *Rescue Democracy from Money - Power.* For instance, writing on the problem of unemployment, Rajagopalachari says, tongue in cheek:

> It would be better to pay a higher wage to officials who support unemployed and idle relatives and dependents at home than to run offices with idle hands doing less than a fair outturn of work but watching the clock all the afternoon *(Rescue Democracy* 80)[4]

Rajagopalachari uses a simile aptly to great effect when he writes on national character:

> National character is the keystone of national affairs. It locks all the bricks together like the keystone in the arch. If the keystone is not there, the arch goes to pieces and tumbles down. It is the improvement of individual character that goes to make, up the uplift of national character, which in turn becomes the keystone of the arch of national prosperity. *(Rescue Democracy* 81)

Rajagopalacharai uses a popular maxim to telling effect when writing on taxation:

> Progressive taxation is an emasculating deceiver. We must cut our coat according to the cloth. Let us remember in the application of the maxim, the cloth is a living sentient thing, not dead or anaesthetized matter. , . . *(Rescue Democracy* 79)

As usual, Rajagopalachari evokes the teachings of Vedanta in *Rescue Democracy from Money-Power* too. He points out that advaita urged the brotherhood of men and adds that the Bhakti movements as well as Hebrew, Christian and Muslim teachers all taught the same principle (*Rescue Democracy* 83-84). He says:.

> They all taught that men are brothers and God the father is thirsting for the true love and loyalty of His sons. They told men that God resides in men's hearts whispering love and honesty. They called this voice by many names. Conscience they called it in English, *Manassaakshi,* the witness of the mind, in Tamil and Kannada and other languages. They wanted men to listen to that voice and surrender themselves to it. They taught the true way of work. (*Rescue Democracy* 83-84)

He cites the teaching of the Gita to the same effect:

> "Work with your mind wholly dedicating the work to Me, looking on the fruits thereof not as yours, but Mine. Fill your mind with Me when you do your work. You will cross over all hurdles and difficulties through My Grace." *(Rescue Democracy* 84)

Rajagopalachari's *Dear Reader* is a collection of his writings in the weekly 'Dear Reader' column of *Swarajya,* the organ of the Swatantra Party launched by him. *Dear Reader* presents his views on a wide range of subj ects of national and international relevance. His views which, at _times, are far ahead of his times, fall into certain broad categories such as democratic polity, constitutional ethos, political process, instruments of state, national economy, national issues, national problems, foreign affairs etc. Some of his views varied over a period of time, but

most are essentially based on the ideology of the Swatantra Party.

As one of the elder statesmen of India, Rajagopalachari has several pieces of advice to give the Government on good governance. He says: "The Central Ministry should set a spirit of competition going among the States in good government. The emphasis must not be on rigidity or force but on moral success" {*Dear Reader* 4).

On the obsession of politicians with stable government, Rajagopalachari writes:

> What the people of India require is good government and not merely a 'stable' government. The stress ought to be on good government which does not seek to make serfs of citizens. The stress should not be on stability. ... A free way of life is not possible under majority oppression and intimidation. The illusion that

'stability' by itself is good must be dispelled. . . .(*Dear Reader* 4)

He warns against totalitarian tendencies:

The drift of totalitarian control must be stemmed with as much dedicated fervour as foreign aggression should be resisted. Hence my reiterated emphasis on the supreme duty of defending the Constitution as it was originally framed. If the authoritarianism of the Central Government is added to by the State Governments sharing in it, the whole country will be a vast desert of totalitarianism with not a blade of democratic grass growing anywhere. Perpetuation of authoritarian control over citizens becomes easier and easier as the days go on and the people get increasingly emasculated. Foreign rule is not half as bad as the tyranny of our own, perpetuating itself without fear of national resistance. (*Dear Reader* 4-5)

He advises the rulers of India thus: "Make no promise lightly; if you make one, keep it. This is good policy as well as honesty" *(Dear Reader* 37).

Of the people's attitude to taxation, Rajagopalachari says:

> The poor on whom falls the bulk of the burden pay high prices, resulting from misrule and indirect taxation, thinking that it is all the decree not of Delhi but of *Janardhana*. This is one of the thousand names of God in the Hindu Scripture, meaning, He who inflicts trials and measures on men. They do not realize that it is not God but the mis-government of the Rulers in Delhi which inflicts the travails. *(Dear Reader* 156)

Rajagopalachari' s attitude to untouchability is expressed thus:

> As the seniormost crusader now in India for removing the religious bar called

'untouchability' , it is my privilege to claim that today no one in India, whether he calls himself a Harijan or by any other name, is barred from any office or job or from entering any school, hospital, nursing home or theatre, or transport or road or eating house. I am also entitled, I respectfully urge, to advise that the legislative reservations proposed to be extended for another ten years should not be done, as this keeps untouchability alive instead of removing it. . . . *{Dear Reader* 239)

Of unemployment, Rajagopalachari says:

> The notion that unemployment causes people to go communist is only partially correct. . . . Their leaning towards Marxism as an 'ism' is due to ignorance of an economic law, not to their own unemployment. Some groups for their own reasons spread

> ignorance among immature young persons making them believe that Marxism can produce paradise without capital. . . .
> *(Dear Reader* 243-44)

Rajaji also explains how and why discontented youth become Naxalites:

> Young Marxists are bound to become Naxalites as the days pass, because there is no objection in the communist mind to violence if it is for what they deem to be a "good" purpose. Marxists are not ideologically non-violent. Their means depend on expediency just as with other communists[sic]. They have as little regard for our Constitution as other Communists. *(Dear Reader* 244)

Rajagopalachari urges that the Government should not forget Gandhiji or his principles:

All the Gandhism that may yet be in the Indian mind will be completely destroyed if we keep up this

double cold war, one against Pakistan and the other against China. A pantomime of threats and swagger-statexnents continually kept up, to clothe and conceal fear, are not good either for us or for our neighbours. Let us not completely forget Gandhiji. The way he taught is the right way in all serious affairs. What does damage to Pakistan inflicts damage on India also, and the same is true, reversed. We are neighbours who should live as good neighbours and set an example. If we fail in this, what would all the philosophy we can mouth be, except matter for laughter? *(Dear Reader* 288)

Ever an advocate of freedom, which was the ground for his founding of the Swatantra Party, Rajagopalachari writes:

> We should defend the fundamental rights and the Constitution as Winston Churchill defended Britain against Hitler, and in the spirit of the true warrior which inspired him, not surrendering to fear or

> the prospect of defeat. The Constitution is worthy of this defence by the Swatantra Party, although it has no prospect of getting into office. It is a sacred duty which the party cannot renounce. It is the Party's *swadharma*. The Party should stand like Casablanca [sic] and his young son who refused to desert the burning ship, as immortalized in the poem by Felicia Hemans. *(Dear Reader* 28)

He adds : "The Swatantra Party stands for the salvage of freedom to the greatest extentpossible . . .*(Dear Reader* 68). He further says:

> The Swatantra Party's primary aim is to educate the electorate and the governments whatever party they may be dominated by. The party does not *seek* power like other parties, but if power and responsibility come, the party will certainly accept the burden. . . . *(Dear Reader* 70)

Characteristically/ Rajagopalachari says that young men and women should pledge themselves to the defence of the Constitution and of freedom in its fullest sense (*Dear Reader* 98). He adds that a society is civilized when men and women therein live and work in fear of law and of God and not in fear of one another *(Dear Reader* 102) .

According to his usual practice, Rajagopalachari invokes the teachings of Vedanta and religion to drive home,his views. Recalling the teaching of the Upanishads that there is a continuous cold war in one's heart between what is good and what is pleasant, Rajagopalachari says that, in this tug-of-war, when intense desire overwhelms good sense, it leads to dictatorship *[Dear Reader* 25). Invoking the Upanishads again, Rajagopalachari says that socialism should be based on love of the poor and not on hatred or jealousy, which incapacitate men to think aright *(Dear* Reader 32-33). Paying a tribute to the late Prime Minister

of India, Shri Lai Bahadur Shartri's achievements, Rajagopalachari cites the words of the Isa Upanishad: "Mind what you do; the body disappears in smoke and ashes. What you have *done* during your life remains, nothing else." *{Dear Reader* 358) In the matter of foreign policy, Rajagopalachari asserts that lasting friendship between nations is governed by a spiritual law:

> The art of friendship, whether between individuals or between nations, is a difficult art. It is governed by a spiritual law. This spiritual law is both simple and taxing. Friendship cannot be acquired by bargain or bought for money- It is of course necessary that one should be ready and eager to help when help is needed. But the thrusting of help creates a sense of obligation, which after-times turns gratitude into hostility. The secret of making another one's friend is to feel

friendly oneself, truly and genuinely, and not for advantage. If one feels this kind of friendliness oneself, one does not ask for or even think of a return for it. The feeling becomes its own fulfilment when one feels this unsolicited and un-bargaining friendship. It then makes a spiritual impact on the other side. The friendship is returned automatically and this reward is felt as a windfall, not as something reaped or acquired by effort. We can have alliances but not friendship by arrangements. Arranged friendships, like arranged marriages, may sometimes turn out well but usually fail to be anything more than something to be patiently suffered.

(Dear Reader 273)

Rajagopalachari employs an apt simile to educate his readers on democratic governance:

> A government does not live upon its votes in Parliament. It lives on the general confidence of the people as distinguished from mere sufferance. A moral thrombosis can take it to a collapse, even as it often happens that an athelete with his muscles all in fine condition collapses when his heart suffers a thrombosis. . .. (*Dear Reader* 3)

Rajagopalachari ridicules socialism thus: "The golden stag that deceived Sita now dazzles the people of India in the shape of socialism . . ." (*Dear Reader* 24). He also writes: "Attempting to achieve socialism without producing wealth is a hunt for the bewitching stag described in Ramayana" (*Dear Reader* 31). Urging that the political institutions of the country should suit the intelligence of the electorate, Rajagopalachari writes:

> Tailored cloths that do not suit do not make one feel comfortable or alert for action. Political institutions unsuited for the education which the electorate have attained are like these clothes that do not fit. . . . *(Dear Reader* 50)

Urging the need for independence and impartiality of judges, Rajagopalachari writes:

> An instrument maker makes a thermometer. But the thermometer's working should not be interfered with but allowed to give evidence truly and fully if the instrument-maker [sic] has a fever. Because he made it, he would not be right in trying to control it on that ground. So too, the Supreme Court should function undeterred by the power of Government. The Supreme Court judges may have been appointed by Government but, once appointed, they should function as

> thermometers and barometers do, in fear of nobody and favouring no-one [sic] . . . . *(Dear Reader* 77)

Charging that State controls have established a subtle form of slavery in India, Rajagopalachari writes: "The State by its control over the citizen's property effectively holds him as one holds a bullock. He can do only what he is allowed to do, and nothing else . . . " *(Dear Reader* 120-21) .

Rajagopalachari enriches his language by using apt and refreshing comparisons. He writes that while governments and their policies are certainly important, the spirit in informing the individuals who make up the nation is most important, "even as the leaves of plants are most important for the life of the plant" *(Dear Reader* 83). He also writes, "Economic quackery is as fatal to a nation's welfare as medical quackery is to a sick person . . . " *(Dear Reader* 112). Commenting on the

delusion of governments resulting from long stay in power, Rajagopalachari writes:

> like the hallucination of the mill that thought it made the river flow by the force of its revolving turbine, a hallucination affects established governments and they get to believe that it is they that make the people work and produce and live happily. . . . *(Dear Reader* 115}

Commenting on China's atrocious demand that India should dismantle its defences on the Sino-Indian border, Rajagopalachari writes: "Hitler's demands during his great day in Europe, which some of us vividly remember, were not of a different nature . . *{Dear Reader* 289). Ridiculing Pakistan for stubbornly persisting in pretending that Bangladesh is "only a hitch in its internal affairs and not a successful rebellion" long after the whole world has recognised the new country,

Rajagopalachari writes: "This is as ridiculous as it would be if Great Britain imagined that the United States of America were part of Great Britain, notwithstanding George Washington's successful rebellion . . . " *(Dear Reader* 297). Rajagopalachari draws a very telling comparison when he says, "Like the air we breathe moral principles are the very life of nations . . . " (Dear *Reader* 313). He makes another telling comparison when he writes:

> Abundant sacred knowledge can be acquired by a laborious study of Scriptures and the commentaries of Seers. But such knowledge, unless absorbed by the soul and converted into automatic feelings and actions, would be just like valuable dung-heaps not buried in the earth and thereby converted into fertilizing material. *(Dear Reader* 316)

Rajagopalachari makes skilful use of metaphor in *Dear Reader.* Cautioning against totalitarian tendencies, he writes:

> If the authoritarianism of the Central Government is added to by the State Governments sharing in it, the whole country will be a vast desert of totalitarianism with not a blade of democratic grass growing anywhere. . .. *{Dear Reader* 5)

On indiscriminately amending the Constitution of India, Rajagopalachari writes: "The Constitution was just a looking glass of the moral obligations contracted by the nation with the old rulers of Indian States. Smashing the mirror does not annul the original . . ." *(Dear Reader* 38) . Commenting on the many amendments to the Constitution of India, Rajagopalachari writes: "The cobbler who makes the shoes gives orders to the plastic surgeon, to make the feet suit the shoe. The shoe is the thing,

says the cobbler" (*Dear Reader* 40-41) . Comparing elected ministers and legislators to the front wheels of a car and the corps of officials to its rear wheels, Rajagopalachari says:

> The rear wheels whose function is traction pure and simple should not seek to steer policy. Nor should the front wheels, whose function is steering and not traction, intervene in the routine of administration to favour one or another in the interest of politics of one sort of [sic] another. (*Dear Reader* 82)

Sarcastically stating that he agrees with Sri. V.K. Krishna Menon's frequent assertion that Indians have not yet achieved freedom, Rajagopalachari comments, "A bird is not free whether it is in one cage or in another" (*Dear Reader* 120). Rajagopalachari describes the taxes imposed by the Government of India as "consumption of capital—the eating up of the goose which should

be left alive to lay its golden eggs . . ." *(Dear Reader* 135). Commenting on the view of the nineteenth century philosophers that humanism without any religion could be sufficient, Rajagopalachari says: "The law of inertia makes a wheel revolve for some time after the driving process ceases. But when the momentum has ceased, the wheel goes dead" *{Dear Reader* 314).

Rajagopalachari occasionally uses imagery to telling effect in *Dear Reader.* Probing the life-sustaining secret of democracy, Rajagopalachari says:

> Democracy's roots are down in the citizen's stamina and good sense, and courage, not only against enemies abroad and in the daily struggle for bread, but against the enemies of freedom and power-grabbers within the nation. If by a perversion of nature the tree-top sucks all the sap from the roots the roots go

dry, the tree crashes down at the first ill-wind and perishes. Whichever political parliamentary party is in power, it should not, if it believes in democracy, be too greedy and foolishly suck too much for the top, drying up the roots. *(Dear Reader* 10)

Opposing the ruling party's tendency to amend the Constitution nonchalantly, Rajagopalachari says: "Truth, like a precious creeper, has now lost support of the tree in a storm and is lying on the ground without anything on which to climb up to reach sunlight . . *(Dear Reader* 28).

Commenting on Mr. G. L. Nanda's announcement that the Government was designating senior officials to receive complaints about "corruption and delays and injustices," Rajagopalachari says:

> Mr. Nanda is distributing medicine to relieve the itching caused by mosquito bites. What about the mosquitoes and their great breeding places? It is well-known

> that stagnant waters of the permit licence-quota-regime breed the mosquitoes. But that is part of the sacred socialist creed and cannot be disturbed. What is proposed is to deal with the biting and not with the mosquitoes or their homes.
> (*Dear Reader* 94)

Humour is not lacking in *Dear Reader.* When a senior official in Madras told Rajagopalachari that he was one of seven children, Rajagopalachari told him that he was lucky to have been born before Dr. Chandrasekhar came on the scene, referring to the controversial Family Planning Minister of the Government of India, who introduced the contraceptive programme which was odious to Rajagopalachari's conservative and orthodox instincts (*Dear Reader* 369).

Rajagopalachari can be quite sarcastic in his tone, as when he writes:

> An ignorant electorate is bad enough but government by ignorant people is disastrous. All this has been said over and over again. So also has it been reiterated that honesty is the best policy, but that truth has not been heeded. So also has it not been heeded that over taxation, be it of the poor or of the better off, is disastrous for the nation, whoever may be the government, or whatever its form. The poor honey bee has been trying through decades to teach rulers how far they can suck the flower and where they should stop. But there is no listening to wisdom. (*Dear Reader* 115)

Rajagopalachari sarcastically comments on the Government's slogan against poverty: "'Pledge yourself to fight poverty!' Military phraseology can't help. Poverty is not an armed soldier . . ." {*Dear Reader* 137). Commenting on the ruling party's

resentment of his criticism and warnings, Rajagopalachari writes: "I along with a few others are birds of ill omen. But birds give a warning which can either be ignored or taken advantage of. There is no good being angry with the birds" *{Dear Reader* 137) .

Rajagopalachari can make judicious use of proverbs to drive home his argument. For instance, to criticise statism as an ancient evil, he quotes an ancient Gujarati proverb: "'When the king takes to trade, the people must take to begging'" *(Dear Reader* 35). Rajagopalachari enriches his writing with the help of apt allusions. Referring to the proposal to impose a ceiling on the size of agricultural holdings despite its clear dangers because it was an election pledge, Rajagopalachari writes: "The tragedy of Dasaratha's pledge to Kaikeyi which, when fulfilled, brought about the banishment of his eldest son and his own death is

not a precedent that can be followed in democracies . . . (*Dear Reader* 171).

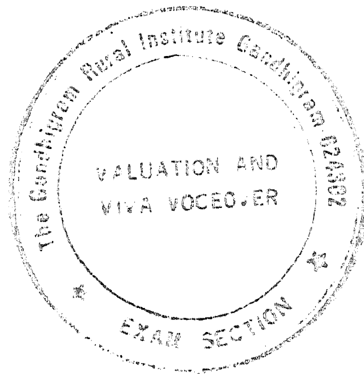
Dear Reader teems with memorable and telling passages. One such passage is:

> Democracy has many legs to stand on, but the rock on which it rests firmly as a castle stands on its foundation is the independence of the judiciary, from the Supreme Court down to the third class magistrate below. . . . [*Dear Reader* 76-77)[5]

Another memorable passage from *Dear Reader* is:

> There is no temple more beautiful than the firmament over our heads, and no icon better than the dazzling sun to represent God and calling for our humble and grateful worship. There can be nothing more elevating than the contemplation of birds of the air joining in chorus to offer their love and worship to the glory that unfailingly appears every morning

replacing the beautiful stars of the night. The Sun is not merely an icon. It is endowed with all the living power of vicegerent of the Supreme Being. All life on this planet, man, beasts, birds [,] reptiles, trees, plants and creepers, get their lives and sustenance from the Sun. (318)



Notes

[1]Rajagopalachari's criticism of the permit-licence quota regime is found in *Dear Reader* (94-98) .

'Rajagopalachari's views on electoral reforms are found in *Dear Reader* (54-66).

[3]Rajagopalachari's views on taxation are found in *Dear Reader* (149-56).

[4]Rajagopalachari' s views on unemployment are found in *Dear Reader* (242-55) .

[5]Rajagopalachari here borrows a bibilical idea (Matt.7.24-25).

Chapter 6

Speeches



Rajagopalachari' s speeches delivered at various places on various occasions have been assessed in this chapter. The collection of his speeches during his tenure, as Governor of West. Bengal, entitled *Speeches Delivered by His Excellency Sri Chakravarti Rajagopalacharya (sic) Governor of West Bengal: 15th August 1947 to 19th June 1948,* his speeches on atomic warfare, entitled *The Voice of the Uninvolved: Speeches and Statements on Atomic Warfare and Test Explosions,* three lectures on Gandhiji by him entitled *Gandhiji's Teachings and Philosophy,* three lectures on Indian culture by him entitled *Our Culture* and some speeches reproduced in Grover's *Chakravarti Rajagopalachari: A Biography of His Vision and Ideas* have been taken up for analysis in the present study.

In these speeches, Rajagopalachari appeals to different types of audience in different tones and styles, making effective use of comparisons, similes, metaphors, analogies and proverbs. His tone is persuasive, sarcastic, satirical, humorous, rhetorical and iterative as the occasion demands. The themes of his speeches are varied such, as discipline, the importance of work, Hindu-Muslim unity, the importance of culture, world-peace etc.

In a speech delivered at a meeting of the Calcutta Rotary Club on 19 August 1947, Rajagopalachari categorically condemns laziness and praises work:

> What is the greatest evil of our life? It is laziness and nothing else. Laziness is sometimes called leisure. Whatever you may call it is nothing but laziness. What Gandhiji wants is that we must throw away that laziness. It may be due to climate, due to religion, but whatever it may be

due to, it is bad. We should no longer be lazy. The wheel in our flag will remind us that we should always churn; we should be always doing something; we should be rolling and turning and producing something. That is the wheel, the wheel of life. Work is the wheel of life and nothing else. *(Speeches as Governor 9)*

In this speech Rajagopalachari aptly uses analogy to drive home his point when he says: "The shortest distance between two points, the mathematicians say, is a straight line. The swiftest approach between two men is love and affection . . ." *(Speeches as Governor* 6).

In a speech delivered at the Gandhi Jayanthi Celebrations on 26 October 1947, Rajagopalachari defined succinctly what constitutes being good:

The fathers of all religions have told us that there is only one way to save the world and it is this-"do not try to find

> fault with others. Be good yourself, then the world will be all right." We will not be better by teaching others but by being good ourselves. *(Speeches as Governor* 12)

In the same speech Rajagopalachari urged Hindu-Muslim unity thus:

> The nourishing and the nursing of grievances is the most subtle form of retaliation and forgetting is not easy but you must forget all that has been done by our enemies. This applies both to Hindus and Muslims. . . . *(Speeches as Governor* 15)

A notable feature of Rajagopalachari's speeches that is illustrated in this speech is the iterative quality reminiscent of the Bible:

> Freedom is easy to ask but difficult to carry. When we asked for freedom and we got it, we agreed to bear a great burden. Other people in the world told us that we

were too many sorts of people and that we would not be able to bear the burden of Independence. We answered them saying that we would be able, even though we were many sorts of people. We then thought we had the spiritual strength to carry out our resolve. We asked the British to quit India and British said that if they did quit, we should be warring among ourselves. Mahatma Gandhi replied that if they quitted we could keep the peace and maintain our freedom, but we are now sorely tried. It is hard to keep the promise we made but we have somehow to keep our promise by keeping the peace. . . . (*Speeches as Governor* 11)

In a speech delivered at the Annual Convocation of the Calcutta University on 3 October 1947, Rajagopalachari eloquently exhorts the graduates thus:

Do not yield to whispers of bellicosity, fear and suspicion, but always be courageous. Have faith ever pursuing the path of good will, tolerance and forbearance. We can conquer all difficulties if only we try. Whether you are doctors or lawyers or school-masters or whatever else, remember that at this convocation you are charged with the duty of carrying the message of good will and unity of culture and tolerance and the spirit of courage in place of the spirit of fear and suspicion. Conversation is a-more effective weapon for good or evil, than any number of speeches. Weigh well, therefore, every word you speak or write so as to ensure that you are never guilty of unkindness or intolerance. {*Speeches as Governor* 21)

In this Convocation Address, Rajagopalachari aptly uses metaphor to drive home his meaning:

> Education does not rest like a brick structure on foundations below but grows like a living tree. The University gives the lead to the High Schools and the High Schools to the Primary Schools, very much like a tree ramifying from the stem upwards to the branches. That is how living things grow and yield: the University is the stem, High Schools the bigger branches with Primary Schools as. their offshoots. *(Speeches as Governor* 23)

In his reply to a Civic Address presented to him at the Darjeeling Municipality on 19 October 1947, Rajagopalachari, using an apt vegetation metaphor, urges national unity:

> Hundreds of communities live in this country and if each thinks it is a separate entity, distinct and separate

from the rest, there will be no meaning to the independence India has secured. All people should therefore regard themselves as the flowers and fruits of the same garden and in maintaining their own beauty, should add to the beauty and grandeur of the garden as a whole, to the benefit and advantage of all concerned. The Government of a country should, like expert gardeners, tend all plants and flowers with equal care and love, and not some plants and flowers only to the neglect of others. Every community must be given full opportunity to retain its own characteristics, but all should blend harmoniously in the bigger aspect of the nation and the country as a whole like the plants and flowers of a garden. . . .

(*Speeches as Governor* 28-29)

The seasoned statesman Rajagopalachari, who often haraunged like a classical orator, could also climb down to the level of little children and speak to them in a language deliberately designed to appeal to them. This is illustrated in Rajagopalachari's Presidential Speech at the Annual Prize Distribution Ceremony of the Maharani Girls' High School, Darjeeling, on 20 October 1947:

> A word of advice to the girls. Whatever work you do, do it in a tidy and sweet manner. It is not necessary to have an angry face. It is pleasant to have a cheerful face. If girls begin to laugh and put on a cheerful face, the boys will soon do the same-[sic] And when the boys begin to put on a cheerful face[,] there will be no trouble in the country and we can then reduce expenditure on the police; and the money saved can be spent on education. Children, make good use of your

> opportunities, do not waste your time, learn to be good, learn to be wise and to understand one another. Quarrel with one another if you must on occasions but make it up quickly. Learn to love. . . .
> *(Speeches as Governor* 32)

In a speech at the Rotary Club of Calcutta on 28 October 1947, Rajagopalachari uses an apt metaphor to urge world peace:

> Let us hope that the caustic soda of Russia and the oil of America will one day mix and give the world the soap which she requires for washing. The. world today badly needs washing, and let us hope that a formula will soon be found to make world affairs clean. *(Speeches as Governor* 39)

In a speech at the Tree Planting Ceremony at Government House Lawn in Calcutta on 31 October 1947, Rajagopalachari uses apt comparisons to telling effect:

> You should not cut the young branches of trees, for a tree cannot afford to lose tender branches any more than you can afford to lose your fingers. How would you like it if trees went about plucking your fingers from your hands? . . . . *(Speeches as Governor* 45)

He adds, "It is as sinful to deprive a living tree of its leaves as it is to shut up the mouth and nose of a growing child and prevent him from breathing" *(Speeches as Governor* 45) .[2]

In a speech at the Annual Function of the Relief Welfare Ambulance Corps at the I.T.F. Pavilion in Calcutta on 28 November 1947, Rajagopalachari uses an apt comparison as well asa fitting proverb to drive home his point against retaliation: "No more can we stop folly by counter folly than we can quench fire by pouring oil on it . . *(Speeches as Governor* 51).

Rajagopalachari was capable of tailoring his language to suit the occasion. For instance, in a speech at the Reception given to him by the British Indian Association, on 3 December 1947, to urge in unequivocal terms the need to put down unconstitutional activities and organisations which indulge in them, Rajagopalachari adopts an appropriate lexis and tone:

> Organizations based on the creed of intimidation and built on personal rivalries and engaged in unconstitutional activities must be put down, if we want democracy and ordered rule to have a fair chance. This is not the time for theoretical reiteration of the 19th century slogan of liberty. The context requires remedies for grave evils that threaten order and peace and everyone must help. The laws of normal hygiene do not apply to sickness. They may be followed

> when the patient is free from his dangerous ill-health. Now the diet and restrictions of sickness must prevail.
> *(Speeches as Governor* 57-58)

In a speech at the Reception given to him by the Bengal Muslim Association on 6 December 1947, Rajagopalachari uses iteration, incremental rhetoric and the metaphor of time to urge the need for hard work:

> We have begun an era of freedom. This is the time for work and not for quarrel . If we do not work now but go on quarrelling, our state of independence will be worse than the state of dependence. We cannot be happy unless we have wealth in the country. We cannot have wealth in the country unless we all work in the plain and honest sense of the word. Whatever may be our profession, if we do not put forth honest work, our country will become

> poorer. If we waste the early hours of the morning, unat is to say the first years of independence we shall be poorer in the evening. *(Speeches as Governor* 61)

In a speech at the Prize Distribution Ceremony of St. Xavier's College on 12 December 1947, Rajagopalachari resorts to iteration to drive home his message of the need to work hard to students: "Must we not work to produce? Must we not study to learn? Must we not learn to behave well?" *(Speeches as Governor* 63) .

In his speech at the Convocation at Santiniketan on 24 December 1947, Rajagopalachari, adopting a legislative tone to suitthe occasion, exorts the new graduates thus:

> We are passing through verydifficult times. In the midst of the onslaughtsof various patterns of behaviour and culture and literature, you have to protect Indian culture. We cannot, however, safeguard our

> culture by merely looking back to ancient things. We must seek the true compromise between contending patterns of culture; and the compromise should be worked out not in haste, not in a spirit of dogmatism, but slowly and truthfully. The young people that go out of this institution have that work to do. By your lives, you should keep alive the pattern of behaviour made by our Rishis. {*Speeches as Governor* 74)

In a speech at a public meeting at Suri on 25 December 1947, Rajagopalachari uses a common man's comparison to drive home his point:

> Even though the father brings plenty of sweets and fruit for the children, it will be of no use to the children if they suffer from indigestion. In the same manner though the leaders of the country have brought freedom to the country our

> people having indigestion cannot enjoy the fruits of that freedom. . . . *(Speeches as Governor* 7 6)

In the same speech he adopts a common man's metaphors too:

> Our government (and our independence) is young. It is a small plant. You cannot dig up the root every now and then. Later on when it is strong you may cut a piece of the root for medicinal purposes but today it is young and you should not interfere with the root. A stable Government is very necessary now. You should give the ministers a chance to serve you. If you put a pot of water and rice over the fire and if you go on changing the firewood you will not get the food cooked. You must allow the wood time to catch fire and burn properly. But if you say, "This piece of wood is not good and so I will take it

> away," you won't get the rice cooked. You must, therefore, allow the Government to function long enough before you can judge that Government. This is my advice as Governor. *(Speeches as Governor* 77)

In his reply to the Addresses of Welcome presented by the Berhampore Municipality and the Murshidabad District Congress Committee at Barrack Square, Berhampore, on 7 January 194 8, Rajagopalachari resorts to a startling simile: "The law of love is as true as the law of gravitation . . ." *(Speeches as Governor* 93). In his speech in reply to the Addresses of Welcome presented by Krishnagar Municipality and the Krishnagar Mahila Samity at the Cathedral Hall, Krishnagar, on 8 January 1948, Rajagopalachari uses an apt comparison:

> To begin with a costly civilization before we begin to work would be like beginning married life with a large load of debt. It

is better to be without debt and live a simple life than to borrow money from the sarkar and to lead a happy and anxious life. . . . *(Speeches as Governor* 98)

In as speech at a Prayer Meeting in Calcutta on 5 February 194 8, in connection with Mahatma Gandhi's demise, Rajagopalachari gives a moving and at the same time eulogizing account of Mahatma Gandhi's death, resorting to a series of iterations in sentences that are progressively longer:

No man can find a death so glorious. He was working [sic] to join and lead prayer. He was going to speak to his Ram. He was a few minutes late and so he was walking fast and he wanted to go to his place as quickly as possible. How may of you would not like to die when running to pray? Mahatmaji did not die in bed, he did not call for hot water or doctor or nurses. He did not die after mumbling incoherent

> words in sickness and unable to identify the relatives and friends around him. He died standing not even sitting down. . ..
> (*Speeches as Governor* 115)

In his reply to some Welcome Addresses on 14 February 1948, Rajagopalachari uses an apt metaphor:

> If you have a good Government like a good reservoir, do not go about like rats making holes in the embankment. All human affairs follow the same natural laws and what applies to a reservoir applies to a Government. If we do not know the course of the water and the strength of the embankment, the embankment will break down. . . . (*Speeches as Governor* 123)

In a speech at the Opening Ceremony of the Howrah Homes, Santragachi, on 22 February 1948, Rajagopalachari resorts to mild satire:

> In this mysterious world, prosperity is just an accident. If you possess money, remember that it is an accident, and that God will not permit the accident to continue for too long. You must therefore spend your money on good and worthy objects while you still have it. Money given in charity is money well spent. . . . (*Speeches as Governor* 138)

Speaking as the Chancellor of Calcutta University at a Convocation on 20 March 1948, Rajagopalachari adopts a philosophical tone to speak to the new graduates:

> A book admired, a speech listened to with reverence affects one momentarily, but it is only the moral and spiritual forces generated by the lives of great men lived purposefully and without blemish that change the conduct of men and women. In every age are born men who can thus

influence others and it is this that sustains the progress of the world. But it would not be right to wait for the appearance of great men. All enlightened and educated men and women must take up the function of showing how to think, how to speak and how to live to the rest of our people and continually act as guardians of culture and right conduct.

(*Speeches as Governor* 153)

In the same speech, at a later stage, Rajagopalachari drops the philosophic tone and changes over to a preacher's tone to advise the new graduates:

Be tolerant to other's[sic] failings. . . . Charity in judgment is a civic policy of the highest practical value. Always lay down for yourselves a more exacting standard than what you would for others. The purpose of all true education is so to

> conduct yourself in your daily tasks as to contribute to the common good. The education that you have received has been given to you because it is expected that you will automatically become an enlightened servant of the community, tolerant, broad-minded and avoiding the errors of passion and prejudice and doing always the right thing not afraid of losing popularity. . . .{*Speeches as Governor* 155)

In a speech on the occasion of the laying of theFoundation Stone of the Gandhi Memorial at Gandhi Ghat on 18 April 1948, Rajagopalachari cautions against mystifying Gandhiji's teachings and urges the simplicity of his teachings:

> Let us avoid as dangerous the tendency to make a great philosopher of Gandhiji. He did not at any time desire to be a philosopher or a scholar. He was a man of

> action. He sought eagerly to guide ordinary men in their daily lives. Let us not make any new complicated doctrine out of his teachings or any rival scholastic philosophy or seek to build peculiar modes of life adding one more denomination to the many already prevailing in India. Let us be simple and loving people, forgiving and forgetting wrongs wherever possible. It is only that way we can do something which Mahatmaji wanted. . . . *(Speeches as Governor* 174)

In a speech at Maharaja Mahindra Chandra Nandi College Prize Distribution Ceremony on 30 April 1948 Rajagopalachari adopts a preacher's tone to advise students:

> You should not seek easy passes and cheap degrees through pressure and agitations. You should do nothing to lower the value of the degrees you obtain. That would be

> the consequence or lowering University standards of tuition or examination. You all know what inflation means. You should not cheapen University degrees. You should bear with the hard standards imposed for them [sic] alone what you acquire will be prized by the world. *(Speeches as Governor* 183)

In his reply to an Address of Welcome from Sisir Kumar Institute at Uttara Cinema on 13 June 1948, Rajagopalachari resorts to an extended metaphor to drive home his point:

> All work becomes pleasant when there is affection associated with it. If there is joy in the heart even difficult tasks become pleasant. ... A mother bathes her child in the bath room. Scrounging may be unpleasant to outsiders but it is a joy to the mother. Every work that we do for the country we should look upon as work done

> for our own baby. . . . All service we render to the motherland hereafter should be done with the same lender care as is shown in nursing a baby. A baby has got all nature to support it, but a baby-State has no inherent vitality unless citizens take care of it. A child is a child of nature, but a State is not a child of nature, but the invention of man.
> *(Speeches as Governor* 2 41) .

In his reply to an Address of Farewell given to him by the Muslims of Calcutta on 18 June 1948, Rajagopalachari uses a telling comparison to drive home his point:

> The plant that is guarded by a fence against the onslaught of the goats lives not on the fence but or. the water that we pour on it. In the same way, the Police and civil authorities only look after the mischief makers but love grows in the

> hearts of men and not in the offices of Government. . . . *(Speeches as Governor* 260)

In an address to the Madras Christian College Union on 16 August 1945, Rajagopalachari condemned the atom bomb as a wicked thing and warned of its proliferation in clear-cut terms:

> A new and terrible weapon of destruction has been made out of this scientific possibility and used actually. The process is still a secret. But when men have discovered a wicked thing, it would not remain a secret for long. The data available are quite enough for people to develop it further. . . . (Voice [12])[3]

In a speech delivered at the Madras YMCA in March 1955, Rajagopalachari dwelt at length and authoritatively on the nightmare of nuclear arms. Knowledge itself is not dangerous if its application is properly controlled by those who

rule the affairs of men. So science itself need not be controlled, as it is also a search for truth. Disarmament or the prohibition of nuclear weapons for purposes of war does not mean the closing up of laboratories or of research for the good of mankind. What is needed is "the emancipation of science from the trammels of war"' (*Voice* 15-17) .

Rajagopalachari said:

> If the world is freed from the incubus-of nuclear weapons, is there much ground to fear aggression and a new world war with conventional weapons? A set of people will tell us to be afraid. But let us remember that the results, positive and negative, of war, stand much better understood now than ever before. International negotiations will have a much better chance in the present world than they had ever before. It is therefore not reasonable to demand what is called

> balanced disarmament and make it a previous condition for doing anything on the nuclear weapon issue. *(Voice* 24)

Rajagopalachari ridicules the misplaced optimism of people regarding disarmament thus:

> The idea that it is easier to obtain general disarmament than to give up nuclear weapons is based on the belief that the terror of nuclear weapons would induce people, by nature wicked, to do the right thing at once. The more I examine the position, the more nonsensical it seems to me. These ideas remind one of the country behind Alice's looking-glass in Lewis Carrol's book, where if you ran in the opposite direction, you got more quickly to where you wished to go. *(Voice* 25)

Rajagopalachari categorically condemns the escapist attitude to atomic weapons thus:

I do not approve of people talking about the 'atomic age' having arrived and to believe and make others believe that there is no escape from it. I am wholly against men throwing the blame on abstract phrases when what counts is human action or human forbearance. The atomic age comes through the activities of men, not by itself. . . . Such talk is a form of escapism, throwing the blame on the age, as if we were compelled to it by some supernatural agency. We should not develop a kindly attitude towards evil saying that evil has come to stay. *(Voice* 30)

In his address to the Thirty-Third Convocation of Delhi University on 26 November 1955, Rajagopalachari emphasises the oneness of the human family. The Bible says that all nations and all races are derived from the same parents. Every religion says that we are children of one great

Father. Modern science also concludes that it is so. Evolutionists like Darvin also say so *(Voice* 37-38) .

Rajagopalachari paid a handsome tribute to Gandhiji thus:

> The thing to be remembered is that Gandhi and India have established that it is no longer possible for any nation to overwhelm and govern a people beyond their borders if the latter are determined not to be so governed. Apart from little trespasses and infringements on the borders, the idea of one country governing another country against their will is a demonstrated impossibility. No one is going to try it hereafter. . . . *(Voice* 40)

In November 1962, Rajagopalachari delivered a series of three lectures at the University of Poona on Gandhiji's teachings and philosophy. With exemplary humility and resorting to his usual

practice of using a simile, Rajagopalachari states that he felt quite unequal to the task of lecturing on Gandhiji:

> If you asked a coal-miner to deliver three lectures on coal what would he be able to do? I am in that state. I have worked with Gandhi for thirty-five years and have continued to live with him after his death thinking of him not only by day, but often in my dreams also, wherein I have talked to him and he to me. Yet I am as much confused about it as our imaginary friend the coal-miner who was asked to deliver three lectures on coal. *{Gandhiji's Teachings* 4)

Rajagopalachari maintains that Gandhiji always wished it to be understood that he invented no new ethics but was teaching only what the Gita preached- Rajagopalachari is of the view that the teachings of the Gita are consistent with the

requirements of the modern world. What is peculiar' to his citations of the Gita is that he always makes the Gita sound very simple and, at the same time, distils quite a large portion of its teachings in a few sentences. For instance, Rajagopalachari says:

> According to the Gita, one should go on with the activities of the world. It does not teach withdrawing from work. We should look upon the tasks which appertain to us, either by being specially entrusted with them or by reason of our place in society, as our duty; and we should perform them with the same diligence and skill which is shown by people who work for selfish ends, while we inwardly maintain a spirit of unselfishness and detachment. Yoga is the name given to this state of mind which enables a man to live a dedicated life while engaged in worldly affairs.

> Enlightenment, humility and devotion are necessary to enable a man to live this life. *(Gandhiji's Teachings* 5-6)

Rajagopalachari maintains that those who conform to the teachings of the Gita are true Gandhians:

> If we try to conduct our lives according to what I have explained as the Gita teaching, we are true Gandhians. The fight which the Gita repeatedly urges is the fight against evil which Gandhiji insisted on as a duty. . . . *(Gandhiji's Teachings* B)

Rajagopalachari explains Gandhiji's principles and beliefs in simple terms. He explains that, to Gandhiji, swaraj meant "the strength to defy and wrest compliance from the British Government in any matter which it deemed important . . . " *(Gandhiji's Teachings* 15), He explains Gandhiji's philosophy of non-cooperation thus:

> He believed firmly that if a people refused to be governed by any invading usurper and his army and the refusal was accompanied by complete non-co-operation and was carried by the people to the point of even suffering unto death, no conqueror and no invading army could carry on. . . . (*Gandhiji's Teachings* 17)

Rajagopalachari describes, in simple terms, and with an illustration, Gandhiji' s principle of religious harmony:

> Gandhiji believed and preached that all religions are God-given and they were true and necessary for the people to whom those religions were revealed. . . . Gandhiji wrote to a Jewish lady in March 1914: "You don't need to be a Hindu. Be a true Jewess. If Judaism does not satisfy you, no other faith will give you satisfaction for any length of time. I would advise you

> to remain a Jewess and appropriate the good in other faiths." *(Gandhiji's Teachings* 21)

In *Gandhiji's Teachings and Philosophy* Rajagopalachari uses apt comparisons to make his meaning clear. He says:

> The special technique which Gandhiji gave cannot be handled with success unless one has habituated oneself to work according to the Gita ethic or at least tried honestly and strenuously to do so—even as a soldier in the army cannot face his tasks and ordeals unless he has gone through a rigorous course of physical training. *(Gandhiji's Teachings* 8-9)

He also says: "Gandhiji's philosophy was like a three-legged race in school sports. His thoughts marched slowly, because they always went tied to corresponding action in his own life . . . *[Gandhiji's Teachings* 20). Rajagopalachari also

cites the Indian proverb that the leopard cannot change its spots (*Gandhiji's Teachings* 14).

In *Our Culture,* Rajagopalachari asserts that Indian culture is derived from Indian Vedanta, which has been inherent in the Indian soil from time immemorial, and to substantiate his assertions, cites Indian scriptures:

> *Atmaupamyam,* finding out what is right and what is wrong by putting yourself in the position of the other person, referred to in the Gita VI 32. . . .is yoga of the highest type. Sita admonishes Ravana to do this introspection and be happy with his own wives. (6-7) ..

Rajagopalachari explains that "Consideration for the feelings of others, for the rights of others, for the faults of others, these are the highest marks of culture, without which a man would be definitely uncultured" *(Culture* 7). By way of scriptural illustration, Rajagopalachari says:

> When Rama spoke cruel words to Sita on the great occasion when she was brought before him after the battle was over and Ravana had been slain, Sita bursts out: "Why do you utter these harsh and unworthy words like an uncultured man speaking to an uncultured woman?" *(Culture* 9)

Rajagopalachari defines *kula dharma* as "the culture of the group or caste," and points out that the Gita uses this phrase in Chapter 1, sloka 40 *(Culture* 14).

According to Rajagopalachari, the Vedantic theories of life and nature are much older than the great exponents of the theories such as dvaita, advaita and visishtadvaita or the Bhakti school of theology, which have left a great imprint on Indian conduct and behaviour *(Culture* [25]).

Rajagopalachari says that the good as well as the bad points in our way of life can almost all be traced to the belief in the doctrines of

transmigration and the inescapable reaping of the fruits of karma through new births if not at once and that the disinclination of most wealthy folk towards institutional charities and their preference for making personal gifts is due to these doctrines of karma and rebirth *(Culture* 26) . With a tinge of sarcasm, Rajagopalachari says:

> The quixotic length to which tenderness towards life of all grades and types is taken, the unreasonable and definitely superior status allotted to vegetarianism, the horror of being responsible for any kind of killing, are all connected with these doctrines of transmigration and *karma. . . . (Culture*26)

Rajagopalachari cites the Ramayana to prove that the great Indian religious epics have moulded Indian culture and the Indian collective unconscious:

> Our great epic legend tells the child that the monkeys served Rama in his misfortune. How can our children look upon the poor monkey except as a good though truant and mischievous brother? The people of India are sad, when they are told that monkeys are deceived and caught and taken alive for torture at the hands of science in distant countries. . . . *(Culture* 27)

According to Rajagopalachari, the Divine is offered for worship in various forms not always restricted to the human form in the avatars of Indian mythology and in Indian temples and that the very multiplicity of the Hindu pantheon adds to this broad approach towards beings animate and inanimate. *(Culture* 28)

Rajagopalachari, pointing to the importance given to women by the Hindu religion, says:

> The ritualistic side of Hindu religion insists on the female as absolutely

> necessary to complete the image of the Divine. Every deity has a female counterpart and the worship of the goddesses is an important part of Hindu religion. . . . {*Culture* 30)

According to Rajagopalachari, there is a link between religious duty and social obligation and, to prove this, he points to the shape of the living houses of the mass of Indian people with their street pent-houses or *pials* as these open verandas are called, as "the visible embodiment of the religious duty of providing shelter to the wayfarer . . ." (*Culture* 31).

Rajagopalachari points to the prime place given to God and religion in the Indian family:

> Whatever the size may be, large or small, there is a place for worship in every house and it is near the kitchen, because all food is first consecrated by being offered to the Deity and then received by

the members of the family as a gift from God. *(Culture* 31)

Rajagopalachari asserts that religion has become an inseparable part of Indian life:

> Even if the doctrines of *Maaya* and *Vedanta* are but very vaguely impressed in our actual way of life, Rama and Sita and Bharata can be seen and felt in all the facets of our culture and in the daily lives of our people, especially in the lives of our unlettered folk. . . . *(Culture* 33)

Rajagopalachari explains the link between culture and character through a simple analogy:

> Bodily cleanliness is different from cleanliness in dress. A man may be clean in body; but he may not have clean clothes to wear. And one may wear very clean clothes; he may not bathe every day, but put on good clean clothes. The two kinds

> of cleanliness may be much connected with each other, yet they are different- . . .
> *(Culture* 2)

He also says: "Culture is external rather than internal. . . . though of course it has much to do with character too . . . " *(Culture 2).*

Rajagopalachari goes on to emphasise the link between culture and character through another analogy:

> The peel encloses the fruit. The orange or the banana peel carries a delicate variation of the quality of the fruit enclosed within it. Often, the aromatic smell of the peel is even more pleasant than the inside of the fruit. Cultured behaviour is often more pleasant than even solid virtue. Culture is a social virtue and therefore comes to notice and pleases more clearly than virtue. Peel and fruit grow together from tiny beginnings to the

> ripe state. So also do character and culture, the mind inside and the external activities, conduct and behaviour, grow together. Culture would be hypocrisy if the inner character does not correspond to it. And hypocrisy is not culture. It is the opposite of it. *(Culture* 6)

Underlining the importance of culture, Rajagopalachari says, "Man attains completion only when culture is added to what he has acquired for fulfilling his wants for the physical body and for satisfying his thirst for knowledge" *(Culture* 10) .

Rajagopalachari says that humility is the essential feature of true culture *(Culture 1)* . According to Rajagopalachari, man can never hope to solve the mystery of the world and so he must grope in puzzlement from birth to death. However, he can certainly avoid cruelty whenever and as far he can, which is a good thing. And this, to Rajagopalachari, is culture *(Culture* 27).

Rajagopalachari maintains that Indian culture has played a decisive and constructive role in Indian history, especially during periods of virtual breakdown of formal governance:

> There have been a great many periods during which the people had neither central nor regional governments exercising effective authority. All these periods of what may be called a no-government condition could not possibly have been tided over but for the self-restraints imposed by our culture, the joint family, and the *jaati* discipline. . . . *(Culture* 21)

In the collection of speeches reproduced in Grover's *Chakravarti Rajagopalachari,* in a speech to the students of Maharaja's College, Mysore, on 19 August 1948, Rajagopalachari uses an extended metaphor:

Have you ever noticed, my young friends, how the bullocks which are yoked to a cart behave? They keep their eyes on the driver who has the whip or stick in his hand and they also keep them on the road. The eyes of the bullock do *Ashtavadhanam.* The bullock watches the slightest movement of the driver's stick, and at the same time watches for any trouble on the road, as well as going forward. Now our future democratic governments will have to emulate the vigilance and the *Ashtavadhanam* of these bullocks, the drivers being the newspaper and public opinion, both of which have got sharp goads in their hands. If the Ministers keep their attention on nothing but the driver and his tricks, they will miss their footing on the road. We two-legged animals can manage to go straight. The

> bullocks not only have four legs but have to keep all four of them going in unison and perfect co-operation with one another—rather a difficult task. . . . *(Vision and Ideas* [75])

In his address to the students of Laxminarayan Institute of Technology on 26 August 1948, Rajagopalachari resorts to iteration to drive home his point:

> We are not a new State with no tradition or culture to look up to. We are a great, big country. Even after partition we are a great big country and we are a very ancient people with a literature and culture, which, if we could sell them to any other nation, they would give their whole empire to buy. So we must work hard and live up to that tradition and culture. *(Vision and Ideas* 80)

In a speech to the Aligarh University Old Boys' Association on 28 March 1988, Rajagopalachari uses persuasive language to urge his point:

> The beauty of one's own religion can be most truly perceived when one studies other religions with sympathy and care. The study of the scriptures and ways of life of other people will enable us to follow our own religion all the better. Islam need not be a subject of study in Aligarh for Muslim boys alone, Hindu students might also study it with advantage and so broaden their cultural outlook. *(Vision and Ideas* 82)

The same persuasiveness marks Rajagopalachari's speech at Loyola College Day Celebrations at Madras on 29 October 1952:

> If you cultivate the art of sympathy, you will grow into something living and so help our country to grow up. That is what

> I call religious impulse. . . . You will find what I have said in the Bible. The sympathy I have referred to is what is called love or charity. It is this you have to develop, not mathematics or physics or science alone. I want you all to get a Doctorate in Natural, Spontaneous Sympathy; and keep it with you throughout your lives. *(Vision and Ideas* 115-16)

Again persuasiveness is the distinct mark of Rajagopalachari's address to the students of Presidency College, Madras, on 18 November 1952:

> Education does not consist in carrying a very heavy load of knowledge in your head. Will you call a donkey which carries a heavy load of clothes on its back, a well-dressed one? The knowledge that you have accumulated and the knowledge that you possess, is reflected and expresses itself in your behaviour every day. You must

> behave properly without thinking about it. The man who behaves well, but who is conscious of it, is a pompous man. Nothing can be done automatically unless you practice it every day. . . . *(Vision and Ideas* 118)

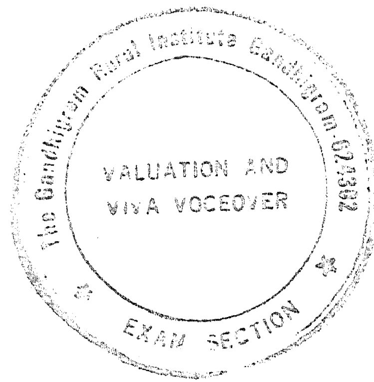
In his Convocation Address at Agra University on 22 December 1956, Rajagopalachari switches over to a lofty tone:

> A sense of true value as distinguished from material and selfish values is the basic requirement for an improvement of the national situation. If this proposition is accepted, not merely as an academical truth but in all seriousness as a question of life and death, it should form the basis for an immediate re-shaping of our educational policy. . . . *(Vision and Ideas* 146)

When speaking at a Reception given by the Sikhs of Delhi on 10 September 1948, Rajagopalachari' s tone turns persuasive:

> The freedom we are all enjoying and which we are so glad to have got, is only a point of time, an opportunity. It is like somebody dressing for dinner. The dress itself will not satisfy his hunger. Even if he is dressed in up-to-date fashion, he must eat before he can satisfy his hunger. Similarly, this nation is dressed for prosperity in the form of freedom. We have got the opportunity of helping one another, but instead of going to dinner, we have begun to quarrel with one another and the dinner is waiting. It has not yet been taken away. God is patient. He keeps the table in readiness. Let us stop fighting and go to our dinner. It is for

that we should pray- *(Vision and Ideas* **214)**



Notes

[1]In this chapter, for purposes of parenthetical documentation, ***Speeches Delivered by His Excellancy Sri Chakravarti Rajagopalacharya (sic) Governor of West Bengal: 15th August 194 7 to 19th June 1948*** will be referred to as ***Speeches as Governor, The Voice of the Uninvolved; Speeches and Statements on Atomic Warfare and Test Explosions*** as ***Voice, Gandhiji's Teachings and Philosophy*** **as** ***Gandhiji's Teachings, Our Culture*** **as** ***Culture*****, and, Grover's** ***Chakravarti Rajagopalachari: A Biography of His Vision and Ideas*** **as** ***Vision and Ideas.***

[2]Rajagopalachari's campaign against deforestation is also found in his short story, "The Tree Speaks" (240).

[3]Similar ideas are to be found in Rajagopalachari's Dear Reader (210-25).

Chapter 7

Summing-Up

Indian prose writing in English has been in practice for nearly two centuries. It was initially used for translation, petitioning, journalism, law, oratory, political agitation, social reform propaganda and educational, historical and philosophical purposes. Raja Rammohan Roy's contribution to this genre was significant. He was followed by writers like Keshub Chunder, Dwaraknath Tagore, Vidyasagar, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, Rajnarain Bose and Naba Gopal Mitra in Bengal, along with their counterparts in other regions.

Rajagopalachari, who occupied important positions in public life, has made a significant contribution to Indian English prose. Born in Thorapalli and educated in Hosur and Bangalore, Rajagopalachari was a successful and famous lawyer. Drawn to public life, he served as one of the

General Secretaries of the Indian National Congress, Prime Minister of Madras Presidency, Chief Minister of Madras State, Central Minister, Governor of West Bengal and India's first Indian Governor-General.

Rajagopalachari's original works in English include *Hinduism: Doctrine and Way of Life*, *Dear Reader, Jail Diary* and *Rescue Democracy from Money-Power.* Four of his stories have been included in two collections. His article "The Development of Indian Literature" bears testimony to his critical bent of mind. He also wrote several articles for *Swarajya,* the organ of the Swatantara Party founded by him. Special mention must be made of his speeches delivered on various occasions, some of which have been collected in *Speeches Delivered by His Excellency Sri Chakravarti Rajagopalacahrya (sic) Governor of West Bengal: 15th August 1947 to 19th June 1948, The Voice of the Uninvolved: Speeches and Statements on Atomic Warfare and Test*

Explosions, Gandhiji's Teachings and Philosophy, Our Culture, and *Chakravarti Rajagopalachari: A Biography of His Vision and Ideas,* compiled by Verinder Grover.

Rajagopalacahari, in his religious and ethical writing, *Hinduism: Doctrine and Way of Life*, emphasises the importance and relevance of Vedantic teaching to the modern world. The Vedantic current of India, he maintains, has influenced and inspired the literature and philosophies of Greece and Rome. He says that the solutions to the problems of mankind lie in Vedanta. As man progresses in the field of science, he tends to forget the Vedantic truths, which is a dangerous trend. The situation is worse in the case of statecraft, wherein man deviates from the moral code governing material concerns. There can be truth and harmony in the world only if there is a harmonious relation between science and religion, and between statecraft and religion.

Rajagopalachari declares that Vedanta must be the guiding principle in everyone's life. He stresses the importance of and the need for religion in one's life. He explains the law of karma in clear terms. He condemns religious fanaticism and extols the beauty of all religions. He makes use of a series of analogies to teach his point that the Oversoul influences all individual souls. He makes effective use of comparisons and metaphors to emphasise the importance of Vedanta and religion. He also uses sarcasm to condemn hypocrisy, particularly in religious matters. The above mentioned features have been pointed out and illustrated in the second chapter of the thesis.

Jail Diary, Rajagopalachari's prison writing, is a day to day record of his life in Vellore jail for three months during 1921-22. In it he talks about the means to achieve independence from foreign rule in elaborate terms. He contemplates on the duties of the people outside jails. He commends

the staunch commitment displayed by those inside the jail. He criticizes the attitude of the Government and the jail authorities towards the prisoners. He also records the persuasive effect of non-violence, explains non-cooperation as a dharma and brings in the Gita teaching of selfless service.

Rajagopalachari uses sarcasm to lambast the inhuman prison conditions. Even when in jail, his writing does not lack humour. His use of similes deserves particular mention. These features of *Jail Diary* have been pointed out and substantiated in the third chapter of the thesis.

Rajagopalachari's short story "Rayappan" sketches the panic suffered by a helpless child. "The Tree Speaks" preaches the need to oppose wrongs and evils and maintains that even plants have life and feelings. "A Pair of Sandals" illustrates the reverence practised by rural folk towards their traditional vocations. "Hats and

Sarees" provides mild fun with its comments on the religious rites carried out in haste by some brahmin priests because they were paid well. The article "The Development of Indian Literature" presents Rajagopalchari's observations on the genres of literature—poetry, drama, fiction and history—and also on the themes of literature.

The short stories and the article show Rajagopalachari as a creative artist and a literary critic. Rajagopalachari's discourse on motherhood, his campaign against deforestation, his advocacy of prohibition and his observations on literary genres have been pointed out and illustrated in the fourth chapter of the thesis.

In *Rescue Democracy from Money-Power,* Rajagopalchari sternly ciriticises the Central Government and its policies. As an elder statesman, he criticizes the ruling party's tendency to collect funds from companies, its partiality in the conduct of elections, its greed to cling to office,

its extensive election expenditure etc. He maintains that, based on ideology, one need not be in the same party all one's life and emphasizes that national character is the keystone of the arch of national affairs.

Rajagopalachari's *Dear Reader* presents his view on a wide range of subjects. Rajagopalachari expresses his views on political process, constitutional ethos, national affairs, foreign affairs etc. He warns against the totalitarian tendencies of the Central Government, condemns untouchability, emphasizes Gandhiji's principles and offers solutions to problems like unemployment. He offers suggestions on how to maintain good relations with foreign countries and how to keep the roots of democracy undamaged.

In these two political works, Rajagopalachari makes effective use of comparisons, similes, metaphors and analogies. He retains his sense of humour here too. Even in his political writings, he

does not desist from bringing in religious teaching and talking about the unity of religions. All these points have been highlighted and illustrated in the fifth chapter of the thesis.

Among the collection of Rajagopalachri's speeches, *Speeches Delivered by His Excellency Sri Rajagopalacharya (sic) Governor of West Bengal* provides samples of Rajagopalachari's appealing and persuasive oratorical skills. *The Voice of the Uninvolved* by Rajagopalachari bears evidence to the fact that he does not leave any subject unexamined. *Gandhiji's Teachings and Philosophy*, a collection of three lectures, presents Rajagopalachari as an ardent follower of Gandhiji and his principles. A collection of another three lectures, *Our Culture,* presents his views on the salient features of Indian culture, which is primarily based on Vedanta and religion, along with minute details of the customary observances in Hindu culture and Indian society. Some other speeches collected in Grover's

Chakravarti Rajagopalachari present Rajagopalachari as a man of varied interests and innovative ideas.

In his speeches, Rajagopalachari finds occasions to preach, teach, educate, elevate, persuade and moralise. Rare is the occasion when he speaks without a constructive and productive idea or message. He makes use of iteration, rhetoric, varying tones and styles, comparisons, similes, metaphors and analogies to drive home his points. All these points have been highlighted and illustrated in the sixth chapter of the thesis.

From the above study, it may be concluded that Rajagopalachari's principal objective in his writings and speeches was to preach and educate his countrymen, who were his readers and audience. His writings and speeches teem with analogies, similes, metaphors and comparisons and constitute a great treasure-house of linguistic nuances and knowledge. He has a tendency to evoke the teachings of the Gita and Vedanta and several religions frequently.

He often refers to Gandhiji and his principles. He is a creative artist as well as a sane critic Humour is a dominant feature of most of his writings and speeches. He repeatedly quotes from the original Sanskrit texts both in his writings and speeches.

The present study has pointed to some areas and topics of further research. It would be a worthwhile endeavour if some scholar were to undertake a comparative study of the linguistic features of Rajagopalachri's translations and condensations and those of his original English writings. Another worthwhile venture would be a comparative study of Rajagopalachri's English writings and his Tamil writings.

It would be a fitting tribute to this elder statesman of India, and a salutary endeavour, if the Government of Tamil Nadu were to collect all the writings and speeches of Rajagopalachari at one place so that scholars may undertake comprehensive

research and make available the rare wisdom of this intellectual giant to the present and the future generations of India.

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